

Voices of Langgam Jawa: Gender, Genre, and Repertoire in Javanese Popular Music

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University of Pittsburgh, 2024

This dissertation is the first to investigate the performance style, cultural politics, and social meanings of a repertoire of songs called langgam Jawa (lit. “Javanese style”) in Central Java, Indonesia. These Javanese-language songs are constructed in a 32-bar AA’BA’ form and either imitate or directly use patterns and instruments from central Javanese gamelan. Langgam Jawa is performed in three genres, namely kroncong, campur sari, and gamelan, and women are most often featured as singers regardless of the genre. Women are largely responsible for maintaining the identity and status of pieces in langgam Jawa and, in turn, women shape the boundaries of these genres in their performances. Langgam Jawa takes on different meanings depending on the social context, which is related to but distinct from genre, in which it is performed. Musicians use sophisticated and subtle ways to elaborate what is typically a 32-bar structure and the form is equally malleable in adjusting to various social contexts. Developed in the late 1950s in the context of kroncong, langgam Jawa was considered a genre (langgam Jawa kroncong). However, musicians quickly began adapting songs to different genres, and by the early 1990s, it was considered a repertoire. I show the way that repertoires and genres are co-constitutive: a repertoire of songs forms the musical identity of a genre as much as genres shape the socio-cultural meaning of particular songs.

Drawing on ethnographic, historical, and music-analytical research in Central Java between 2014-2023, I detail four case studies regarding langgam Jawa. I attribute the durability of langgam Jawa to three factors: (1) the ingenuity of performers in reforming and repurposing this

song form in different social contexts, particularly women singers who are able to cross genres; (2) the evocative power of nostalgia of langgam Jawa for Javanese listeners, whether a nostalgia for earlier years in the listener's own life or an idyllic past that urban listeners never experienced directly; and (3) the transition of langgam Jawa from a genre in the context of kroncong to a repertoire that is played in the contexts of kroncong, gamelan, and campur sari.

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Preface

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I drew from information gathered during three extended trips to Java and one shorter trip. I first went to Surakarta in 2014-2015 with the support of a Darmasiswa scholarship from the Indonesian Ministry of Culture and Education and studied at Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta. I returned in 2017-2018 with the support of a Fulbright Student Research Grant with Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta as my host institution and Peni Candrarini as my sponsor. I also studied Indonesian language at Wisma Bahasa for three months at the start of this grant period with the support of a Critical Language Enhancement Award. At Wisma Bahasa, I would like to thank all of my language teachers, particularly Pak Jono and Pak Wanto. In 2019 I returned for a short trip with the support of an Indo-Pacific Studies Research Grant. I conducted my formal fieldwork in 2022-2023 with the support of a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Award with Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta as my host institution and Danis Sugiyanto as my sponsor. I would like to extend my gratitude to all of the organizations who supported my research and especially to Aditya and the other members of the International Office of ISI Surakarta.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is the first to investigate the performance of a repertoire of Javanese vocal music called *langgam Jawa* (lit. “Javanese style”). *Langgam Jawa* is a song form that is popular among many Javanese people that emerged in the late 1950s and peaked in popularity in the late 1960s and early 1970s. My interlocutors describe *langgam Jawa* as a 32-bar AA’BA’ musical form that uses Javanese language and musical textures¹ that either imitate or directly use *gamelan* patterns and instruments. Scholars whose work deals with *langgam Jawa*, such as Adi Wasono (1999), also conceive of *langgam Jawa* as a repertoire. During a preliminary field site visit to Java in 2019, I found that this repertoire is actively performed in three genres, namely *kroncong*, *campur sari*, and *gamelan*, and that women are most often featured as singers regardless of the genre. *Langgam Jawa* is also occasionally performed in other genres such as *dangdut*,² but that is not the focus of this dissertation. *Langgam Jawa* takes on different meanings depending on the social

¹ In his 1991 liner notes for *Indonesian Popular Music: Kroncong, Dangdut, & Langgam Jawa*, Philip Yampolsky describes the texture of *kroncong* music as “stratified” in the way that, like *gamelan*, it features “a flowing main melody, fast high- and mid-range figuration, and much slower bass punctuation.” Yampolsky is careful to note that he does not believe that this musical texture arose from diatonic forms of *kroncong* imitating *gamelan*. However, my interlocutors tell me that *langgam Jawa* as played by *kroncong* ensembles imitates the *gamelan* and therefore imitates the “stratified” musical texture of *gamelan*. When I say musical texture in this dissertation, I have this stratified texture in mind. *Kroncong* musicians that I spoke with tell me that the flute (transverse flute) and the violin [I. *biol*] imitate the flowing melodies of the *suling* (an end-blown flute) and *rebab* (spike fiddle) respectively. The high and mid-range figurations of the *bonang* (pitched percussion) and the *siter* (plucked zither) are imitated by the *cuk* and *cak* respectively in *langgam Jawa kroncong*. My interlocutors say that the cascading lines played by the guitar [I. *gitar*] imitate those of the *gambang* (wooden pitched percussion instrument) in *gamelan*. The *selo* is said to imitate the *kendhang* (Javanese drum with leather heads). The slower bass punctuation that Yampolsky describes, marked by the *gong* (large, hanging pitched percussion) in *gamelan* ensembles is marked by the upright bass [I. *bas*] within *kroncong* contexts.

² *Dangdut* is a popular genre influenced heavily by Indian film music and *orkes Melayu*, that emerged in the 1970s. Typically instrumentation includes a flute known as *suling*, a percussion instrument known as *gendang*, electric guitar, electric bass, a drum kit, and a singer.

context, which is related to but distinct from genre, in which it is performed. Although my interlocutors refer to this song form as 32-bars, musicians use sophisticated and subtle ways to elaborate this basic structure and the form is equally malleable in adjusting to various social contexts. Therefore, my dissertation will address the following questions: (1) what does *langgam Jawa* tell us about the mutual exchange between and malleability of the categories genre and repertoire? (2) how do Javanese musicians adapt and mold this musical form? and (3) what is the role of women in shaping performances of *langgam Jawa*?

According to Stevens and Schmidgall-Tellings (2004), *langgam*³ is a Malay word that can mean 1) way, custom, style 2) habits (of a people) or 3) melody, tune and *Jawa* is the adjective for Javanese in this context. So, *langgam Jawa* might mean a Javanese custom or style, Javanese habits, or a Javanese melody or song. A general trend I found in my research is that *kroncong* players suggest that the *langgam Jawa* song form emerged from the *langgam kroncong* song form which preceded *langgam Jawa*. Meanwhile *gamelan* musicians often assert that *langgam Jawa* emerged from the *ketawang* song form in *gamelan* music.⁴ *Langgam kroncong* emerged in the latter half of the 1930s and applied the musical idioms of *kroncong* to 32-bar AA'BA' songs form from European and American popular music (Yampolsky 2013, 331). The term “*langgam kroncong*,” however, did not appear until sometime after World War II (Ibid.). I personally follow

³ Otto Stuparitz's 2022 dissertation provides further context for the term *langgam*. Stuparitz discusses the contributions of Chinese Indonesian pianist Bubi Chen and quotes English translations by Weinaktoe for the liner notes of Chen's album *Lagu Untukmu (Songs for You)*. Bubi Chen played select “‘evergreens’ on the recording that were ‘tophits’ [sic] during the period between 1943 and 1945.’ These ‘evergreens’ were known as ‘Langgams’ in 1943, a new musical form ‘based upon the existing more classical ‘kroncong’ form.’ Bubi Chen is said to have ‘succeeded in presenting the langgam form in a new, modern and progressive shape’ with ‘melodious dance’ and ‘half improvisational’ compositions” (2022, 2-3).

⁴ A difference between *langgam Jawa* and *ketawang* in *gamelan* settings is that *langgam Jawa* is usually played in temporal densities, or *irama*, known as *irama wilet* and *rangkep* while *ketawang* is played using temporal densities known as *irama satu* and *dados*.

well-known Javanese composer Gesang Martohartono's definition of *langgam Jawa*: a song form consisting of a AA'BA' that uses Javanese scales (Wasono 1999, 5).

The repertoire of *langgam Jawa* is performed in several distinct Javanese musical genres. In this dissertation I focus on three genres, namely *kroncong*, *gamelan*, and *campur sari*. I will provide a brief description of each genre while longer overviews can be found in the Glossary. I will then discuss musical characteristics of *langgam Jawa* including form, texture, timbre, and lyrics followed by a section detailing the history of this repertoire and highlighting the contributions of specific individuals. After a discussion of genre in *langgam Jawa*, I will discuss the meaning of *langgam Jawa* listening audiences.

1.1 Overview of Langgam Jawa

1.1.1 Musical Characteristics: Genre, Form, Texture, Timbre, and Lyrics

Kroncong ensembles use stringed instruments such as a pair of ukuleles (*cuk* and *cak*) and violin, introduced to the archipelago by the Portuguese in the 16th century (Yampolsky 2013). A typical *kroncong* ensemble involves seven instrumentalists and at least one vocalist. In this dissertation, when I refer to *gamelan* I am referring to the tradition of *gamelan* in Central Java that is alternatively known as *karawitan*. *Gamelan* is a multi-timbral melodic percussion ensemble, originating in the Indonesian islands of Java and Bali. Although *gamelan* began as a royal court orchestra, it can now be heard in classical, contemporary, and university contexts internationally. *Campur sari* ensembles can and often do use all of the instruments involved in *kroncong* and

gamelan ensembles. *Campur sari* ensembles now feature a keyboard and many include a drum set which is typically electronic. In lieu of or sometimes in addition to an acoustic guitar and upright bass, some *campur sari* ensembles use an electric guitar and electric bass.

In his 1991 liner notes for Indonesian *Popular Music: Kroncong, Dangdut, & Langgam Jawa*, Philip Yampolsky describes the texture of diatonic forms of *kroncong* music as “stratified” in the way that, like *gamelan*, it features “a flowing main melody, fast high- and mid-range figuration, and much slower bass punctuation.” Yampolsky is careful to note that he does not believe that this musical texture arose from diatonic forms of *kroncong* imitating *gamelan*. However, my interlocuters tell me that *langgam Jawa* as played by *kroncong* ensembles imitates the *gamelan* and therefore imitates the “stratified” musical texture of *gamelan*. When I say musical texture in this dissertation, I have this stratified texture in mind. *Kroncong* musicians that I spoke with tell me that the *flute* and the *biol* imitate the flowing melodies of the *suling* (an end-blown flute) and *rebab* (spike fiddle) respectively. The high and mid-range figurations of the *bonang* (pitched percussion) and the *siter* (plucked zither) are imitated by the *cuk* and *cak* respectively in *langgam Jawa kroncong*. My interlocuters say that the cascading lines played by the guitar [I. *gitar*] imitate those of the *gambang* (wooden pitched percussion instrument) in *gamelan*. The *selo* is said to imitate the *kendhang* (Javanese drum with leather heads). The slower bass punctuation that Yampolsky describes, marked by the *gong* (large, hanging pitched percussion) in *gamelan* ensembles is marked by the upright bass [I. *bas*] within *kroncong* contexts.

Musical genres, in Java and elsewhere, are often circumscribed in terms of vocal timbre,⁶ the character or quality of a musical sound or voice (as distinct from its pitch and intensity). Since

⁶ See Fales (2002) for a description of the way the Barundi of the Congo define *anga* or *Inanga Chuchotée* based on a whispered vocal timbre or Chapter 4 of Eidsheim (2015) for a description of the role of vocal timbre in operatic works from the Romantic era.

langgam Jawa is performed across several genres, in my research it is crucial to understand how *langgam Jawa* as a repertoire is articulated in different musical genres. For example, when this repertoire emerged in Indonesia in the late 1950s, the song melodies and accompaniment approximated the tuning systems of the traditional Javanese *gamelan*.⁷ *Langgam Jawa* was initially arranged for *kroncong* ensembles, a genre of string-band music, but is now most commonly heard in the context of a genre called *campur sari* which uses electronic instruments in a Western diatonic tuning system. Women are featured vocalists in all of these genres and listeners have told me that they sense that “something is lacking” in the rare instances where only male singers are present. In this way, women are largely responsible for maintaining the identity and status of pieces in this repertoire and, in turn, women shape the boundaries of these genres in their performances.

The lyrics of this repertoire are in Javanese.⁸ The songs are usually about love, nature, or occasionally have revolutionary themes. There are two basic pentatonic tuning systems used for *langgam Jawa*, namely *slendro* and *pelog*. In *gamelan* or sometimes *campur sari* arrangements of *langgam Jawa*, the *pelog* and *slendro* tuning systems are used whereas in *kroncong* or sometimes *campur sari* arrangements, an equal-tempered, approximation of *pelog* and *slendro* is used. The *pelog nem*⁹ mode used in *gamelan* is represented by the numbers 6, 1, 2, 3, and 5 in cipher notation which is approximated by G, B, C, D, and F# in *langgam Jawa kroncong* arrangements.¹⁰ In

⁷ *Gamelan* is a generic term used to describe pitched percussion ensembles in Indonesia which vary in size and instrumentation (Kartomi & Mendonça 2001). Although there are many rich *gamelan* traditions in Indonesia, throughout this dissertation I exclusively refer to *gamelan* in Central Java, alternatively known as *karawitan*. The tuning for each *gamelan* set, in Central Java and elsewhere, is always unique. In other words, two *gamelan* sets could not necessarily be played together because the tuning systems would likely not match.

⁸ Occasionally composers will create *langgam Jawa* songs in Indonesian language, but this is an exception to the rule.

⁹ *Pathet* is a Javanese word that is often translated to mode (Grove 2011). Richard Pickvance writes that *pathet* in *gamelan* relates to the range of notes occupied by melodic lines, a preference for certain tones and the avoidance of other tones, certain sections of *wayang* performances, times of day, and the overall mood and character of the composition (2005, 52).

¹⁰ G=6, B=1, C=2, D=3, F#=5.

arrangements of *slendro* songs, 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6, in gamelan cipher notation for *slendro manyura* are approximated by the diatonic notes G, A, C, D, and E in *langgam Jawa kroncong* arrangements.¹¹ With *campur sari*, the choice of either *pelog* and *slendro* or equal-tempered approximations of those tuning systems depends on the group; different groups tune their instruments in different ways. All three of the genres that I am focusing on also include repertoires other than *langgam Jawa*. For example, *kroncong* ensembles also play *kroncong asli* repertoire, *campur sari* groups also play *pop Jawa* repertoire, and *gamelan* ensembles play long form repertoire known as *gendhing*.

Javanese language is critical to this project for several reasons: (1) it is the language in which the majority of my interlocutors are most comfortable; (2) this repertoire uses Javanese language and this use is one of several identifying markers of the repertoire; and (3) the use of Javanese language in everyday life is political and is part of a complex of language and power in what is now Indonesia (Anderson 1990, Errington 1998). Javanese language has three distinct registers of formality and Javanese speakers switch between these registers based on their own position relative to the social class, age, and gender of their interlocutors. In this way, Javanese social and cultural customs are deeply embedded with Javanese language because it is not possible to express these same social dynamics with the Indonesian language. When Indonesian was formally declared the national language in 1945, it seemed to be a concession by the ethnic majority Javanese (Anderson 1990, 139). Some Javanese intellectuals may have felt that Javanese should have been the national language as it was the language of the near majority (Anderson 1990 139). For others, however, Malay language afforded a means to break out of the hierarchies of formality that are inherent in Javanese language and in this way Malay was seen as more

¹¹ G=1, A=2, B=3, D=5, E=6.

democratic. This matched with the nationalist movement more broadly in that it was seen to be a breakdown of many of the hierarchical features of Javanese sociality and “breaking out of Javanism” more generally (Ibid.).

1.1.2 Historical Overview

During the revolutionary period between 1945 and 1949 as well as the years following Indonesian independence during the final days of 1949, *langgam Jawa* was performed in the musical genre known as *kroncong*. In his Independence Day speech delivered in 1959, Sukarno urged the country’s youth not to indulge in “Western” musical forms like rock’n’roll, instead urging them to listen to more nationalistic Indonesian music with *kroncong* being a prime example (Sen & Hill 2000, 164). Nationalist author Armijn Pané believed *kroncong* was ideal for building a “modern, unified, and dynamic Indonesian culture” (Frederick 1997, 61). Standard *kroncong* forms such as *kroncong asli* or *langgam kroncong* use diatonic tuning systems and typically use Indonesian language. Nationalists who favored *kroncong* as a national music appreciated the fact that the associated language and tuning systems were not specific to any single island or ethnic group (Notosudirdjo 2001, 100). The emergence of *langgam Jawa kroncong* ran somewhat counter to Sukarno’s appeal, as it uses localized elements such as Javanese language and musical idioms.¹² *Langgam Jawa kroncong* aligned with Sukarno’s call, however, in that it uses instrumentation from a national musical form (*kroncong*).

¹² By musical idiom, I am referring to musical elements such as melodic passages, textures, timbres, or rhythmic patterns that are particular to a certain genre or musical style.

During the autocratic militaristic regime of Indonesia's second president Suharto, known as the New Order, the state aimed to manifest a sense of modernity and "order" and was simultaneously anchored in tradition (Pemberton 1994). During this era, *langgam Jawa* was featured in Suharto's campaign rallies and was performed to entertain the military (Skelchy 2015). Further, *langgam Jawa* performers enjoyed prestige and modern luxuries such as air travel to international events (Sugiyanto 2003).¹³ Chapter 2 will investigate an example of *langgam Jawa* being used as a means of promoting Suharto's political party, in this case in the form of an album that was played at rallies and political offices preceding the national election in 1997.

Although *langgam Jawa* may be waning in popularity, replaced by other popular forms, people in Surakarta still frequently hire *kroncong* and *campur sari* ensembles to perform at weddings or special events and *langgam Jawa* is often central to the setlist. This music matters, if for no other reason, than for the sheer number of people not only listening to but also playing this repertoire. By conducting a critical examination of *langgam Jawa* repertoire and the role of Javanese women's voices, this dissertation will build toward a more nuanced understanding of how this repertoire is used by ethnically Javanese people in the world's fourth most populous country. Further, this dissertation will offer insight into the relationship between repertoire and genre in that repertoires constitute genres as music as genres constitute repertoires, and people are at the center of these negotiations. For instance, *campur sari* repertoire incorporates many songs that are part of the broader *langgam Jawa* repertoire, including *langgam Jawa* songs that were originally composed for *kroncong* ensembles. *Langgam Jawa* is therefore integral to *campur sari* as a genre culture and key to the way that *campur sari* interpellates publics in Central Java. At the

¹³ Amik Dasuki, personal communication, August 2nd, 2018. Amik Dasuki was a singer for the *kroncong* group that was flown by the Indonesian government to perform in the New York World's Fair in 1964.

same time, *kroncong* groups in Central Java now frequently play *langgam Jawa* songs that were originally written for *campur sari* ensembles and use melodic and rhythmic patterns from *campur sari* music. The popularization of *campur sari* as a genre was part of how these *langgam Jawa* songs spread into other genres. Although male musicians play a key role in shaping the melodic and rhythmic textures of these *langgam Jawa* songs, women as singers often choose what song they will sing. Even if a woman singer chooses a *langgam Jawa* song that was composed in the context of a different genre, her vocal timbre is key in maintaining the respective genre culture, whether *kroncong*, *campur sari*, or *gamelan*.

Yampolsky (1987) and Mrázek (2005) have described *langgam Jawa* as a genre. When I used the term *langgam Jawa kroncong* in an email with Philip Yampolsky, he asked if it was “perhaps a retronym that emerged after varieties of *Langgam Jawa* appeared that were not played on the *kroncong* ensemble?”¹⁶ We discussed the topic further and agreed that *langgam Jawa* was once a genre in and of itself and is now a repertoire that appears in several genres. Yampolsky mentioned the Central Java-based composer Andjar Any who was at the peak of his career in the 1960s and said, “Andjar Any made his name as a composer of *Langgam Jawa*, not *Langgam Jawa Kroncong* and not *Kroncong*.”¹⁷ I contend that the emergence of *campur sari* as a popular genre in the 1990s is causal with *langgam Jawa* becoming a repertoire as opposed to a genre. *Langgam Jawa* repertoire began to be composed specifically for *campur sari* ensembles in the 1990s. These *langgam Jawa* pieces, along with those that had been initially composed for *kroncong* or *gamelan* began to be exchanged and performed among genres. *Langgam Jawa* became a body of songs that

¹⁶ Philip Yampolsky, personal communication, August 8th 2020.

¹⁷ Philip Yampolsky, personal communication, March 27th 2024.

musicians played across genre cultures. In this way, popularization was part of the transition of women were center stage in the popularization of *campur sari* in the 1990s and 2000s.

Kroncong singer Adji Muska suggested that there would have been no single moment that *langgam Jawa* repertoire emerged and no single person that it could be attributed to.²² Instead, it developed gradually and in collectivity; a range of contributors slowly built this repertoire together.²³ At the same time, it is possible to point to specific moments and specific contributions that are part of the wider fabric of this repertoire. For instance, Gesang Martohartono wrote the first *langgam Jawa kroncong* piece in *slendro* tuning as opposed to *pelog*, namely “*Kacu Biru*” (“Blue Handkerchief”) (1950) (Sugiyanto 2003, 8). Waldjinhah recorded the album *Ratu Kembang Kacang* with Lokananta in 1959 which contained *langgam Jawa* repertoire as well as several pieces that uses the textures and instrumentation typical of *langgam Jawa kroncong* while departing significantly from the now typical 32-bar form. Her song “*Walang Kekek*” did not reach the top of the national charts until 1968 (Skelchy 2015; 233, 235). I offer these dates as some of the earliest recordings and anecdotes regarding the emergence of this repertoire, however it is likely that groups were experimenting with the textures and instrumentation of *langgam Jawa* well before it would have been recorded. Audiences would have also heard this music at competitions such as *Ratu Kembang Kacang*, which Waldjinhah won the year before recorded an album of the same name. At least in the city of Surakarta, it is certain that audiences were hearing *langgam Jawa kroncong* no later than the late 1950s and that this music had achieved wide circulation by the late 1960s. More research is needed in order to determine a specific date for the origins of the Repertoire.

²² Adji Muska, personal communication, October 24th, 2022.

²³ Ibid.

The mass appeal of *langgam Jawa kroncong* waned by the late 1970s although it never entirely vanished. Further, *langgam Jawa* sustained and developed in new social contexts in a genre called *campur sari* which mixes *gamelan* and *kroncong* instruments. According to Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta (Indonesian Arts Institute of Surakarta) faculty member Supanggih, *campur sari* was initially created in the 1960s by musicians at Radio Republik Indonesia and the organizations URIL (*Urusan Moril*, Moral Affairs)²⁴ which dealt with moral matters in the military. Both RRI and URIL had their own *gamelan* and *kroncong* groups and their experimentations led to the earliest examples of *campur sari*, played by a group called Campursari RRI Semarang (Wiyoso 2007, 108).

When Campursari RRI Semarang was active in the 1960s, the group only played in a limited area, mainly in the Central Javanese cities of Rembang and Pati, and only occasionally in Semarang (Wiyoso 2007, 111). The group played mostly *langgam Jawa* pieces, often performing *langgam Jawa* pieces that were written for *gamelan* by Ki Nartosabdho.²⁵ Ki Nartosabdho (1925-1985), developed is also arguably one of the most influential and prolific figures in terms of *gamelan* settings of *langgam Jawa*, and was performing and living in Semarang during this time. Joko Wiyoso, a former faculty member of Universitas Negeri Semarang (Semarang State University) states that the *langgam Jawa* pieces that Ki Nartosabdho composed were considered to be a musical form, in other words a repertoire, running counter to the classification of *langgam Jawa* as a genre among *kroncong* ensemble at the time.²⁶ *Kroncong* in the late 1950s until the mid 1990s conceived of *langgam Jawa* as a repertoire, while *gamelan* musicians in the late 1950s until

²⁴ The full acronym is URIL URHIBJAH (*Urusan Moril Hiburan dan Kesejahteraan Angkatan Darat*, Army Entertainment and Welfare Moral Affairs).

²⁵ Joko Wiyoso, personal communication via Whatsapp, July 15th, 2024.

²⁶ Joko Wiyoso, personal communication, November 11th, 2022.

now consider *langgam Jawa* to be a song form. *Langgam Jawa* is a musical form in the context of *gamelan* in the same way that *ketawang*, *ladrang*, and *lancaran* are musical forms. *Gamelan* musicians typically simply say “*langgam*” instead of “*langgam Jawa*” to refer to pieces that use this song form as all of the *langgam* for *gamelan* uses Javanese language and musical textures.

To complicate matters further, *kroncong* groups sometimes performed Ki Nartosabdho’s compositions. “*Aja Lamis*” (“Don’t Be Untrue”) was a popular choice among *kroncong* groups even before the 1990s. For example, Waldjinah record “*Aja Lamis*” in 1989 with Orkes Keroncong Bintang Surakarta (ACI-079). Based on a product catalog directly from Lokananta, the reording studio classified this album as “*Lagu Kerancong [sic] Langgam Jawa*” (*Langgam Jawa Kroncong* Songs) already showing the shift of marking the performers as a “*kroncong*” group instead of a “*langgam Jawa*” group. A 1973 (ACI-011) release in the Lokananta catalog featured three *kroncong* groups, namely Orkes Keroncong Irama Sehat (Robust Rhythm), Radio Orkes Surakarta, and Orkes Keroncong Aneka Warna (Orkes Keroncong Many Colors) and included *langgam Jawa* songs such as “*Putri Gunung*” (“Mountain Girl”) and “*Jenang Gula*” (“Sticky Coconut Candy”). Lokananta classified this release as as “*Langgam Djawa/Lelagon Kawuri*” (*Langgam Jawa/* Songs of the Past) making no mention of *kroncong*.

Campur sari all but disappeared for a few decades and the reemerged in the early 1990s. My interlocuters call *campur sari* from the 1960s “*campur sari klasik*” (classic *campur sari*) while they call *campur sari* from the 1990s “*campur sari populer*” (popular *campur sari*) referring to the sound of the keyboards that became prominent in the 1990s and the increased circulation of the music. Manthous (1950-2012), songwriter and bandleader for Campur Sari Gunung Kidul, was a key figure in *campur sari* during in the early 1990s. When Manthous began touring throughout Java with Campur Sari Gunung Kidul and singers like Sunyahni and Nurhana were building their

careers, *campur sari* was circulating throughout Central Java and throughout other parts of Java in live performances, CDs, VCDs, and radio play. I posit that *langgam Jawa* began to transition from a genre to a repertoire due largely to the popularization of *campur sari* as a genre. In the 1960s, *campur sari* was not well-known enough to recast *langgam Jawa* as a repertoire, but once *langgam Jawa* songs were heard throughout Java in the 1990s played by “*campur sari populer*” groups, *langgam Jawa* was increasingly understood as a genre. Some of the *langgam Jawa* repertoire written for *kroncong* ensembles was revived in the 1990s in *campur sari* arrangements, along with new *langgam Jawa* songs written specifically for this genre. By the 2010s, *campur sari* began to decline²⁷ although by the time of my research in 2022-2023 performances of *campur sari* still persist in Central Java.

1.1.3 Meanings for Audiences in Central Java

On January 7th, 2023, a wedding with over a thousand guests took place in Tawangmangu, a mountainous area outside of Surakarta, Java. The father of the groom had made his fortune in garlic and shallots, staples of Javanese cooking. *Campur sari* group Sangga Buana was hired for this event and they brought five female singers [J. pesindhen] in matching sequined outfits. Four male MCs entertained the guests with their slapstick humor and lively dance moves. At the energetic peak of the event, guests requested songs, offered tips in a traditional ceremony called saweran, and joined the singers and MCs in dancing. A song form called *langgam Jawa* was

²⁷ Nancy Cooper (2015) notes a decline in the 2010s while Benjamin Brinner (2008) places the decline slightly earlier, in the latter half of the first decade of the 21st century.

threaded throughout the musical selections that day. This included a spontaneous invitation from one of the MCs for me to sing “Yen Ing Tawang Ana Lintang” (“If There Are Stars in the Sky”) as he strolled me through the aisles. Twenty-five musicians played a full gamelan²⁸ set, keyboards, and stringed instruments render these songs with power and volume, lending a lively [I. rame] atmosphere to the wedding.

Later that night, some of the same langgam Jawa songs were played at an informal rehearsal [I. latihan] in Baki, another area just outside of Surakarta. At this rehearsal there was a group of seven musicians playing a style of string-band music known as kroncong. Everyone sat cross-legged on simple woven mats and shared tea. The atmosphere was calm and intimate and neighbors periodically came by to watch. This group is called Cahaya Irama (Rhythm of Light) and is comprised of close friends who have known each other for decades. People take turns singing and tonight there are two female singers and one male singer. When Cahaya Irama performs, which is fairly infrequent, it is usually for neighborhood gatherings or small events. Muhammad Solihin, bass player for Cahaya Irama, tells me, “Music for me is just a.”²⁹ *Langgam Jawa* is something he plays to spend time with people he cares about and console after a hard day.

At a *latihan* for a community *gamelan* group called Tri Darma on June 12th, 2023, members of the group decided to play “Yen Ing Tawang” and then connected this piece directly to a *gamelan* piece known as “*Tanjung Gunung*” (“Headland Mountain”) which employs a *lagon* song form.

²⁸ *Gamelan* is a generic term used to describe pitched percussion ensembles in Indonesia which vary in size and instrumentation (Kartomi & Mendonça 2001). Although there are many rich *gamelan* traditions in Indonesia, throughout this dissertation I exclusively refer to *gamelan* in Central Java, alternatively known as *karawitan*. The tuning for each *gamelan* set, in Central Java and elsewhere, is always unique. In other words, two *gamelan* sets could not necessarily be played together because the tuning systems would likely not match.

²⁹ Muhammad Solihin, personal communication via Whatsapp, October 19th 2024. [I. “Music bagi saya cuma untuk pelipur lara.”]

These rehearsals are usually led by Suripto, an esteemed *gamelan* musician and teacher, but he has been absent for several weeks because of pain in his knee. It took many visits to the doctor for Suripto's pain to be diagnosed and treated. Several months prior we had worked hard to prepare to play several traditional *gamelan* pieces on Radio Republik Indonesia Solo (Indonesian Republic Radio of Solo) on May 4th 2023 without Suripto leading the group. In June when the broadcast had already taken place, the musicians chose a few *langgam Jawa* pieces as a palate cleanser; short pieces to serve as a refreshing interlude between longer *gamelan* pieces, and as part of a period of rest after a big performance.

Langgam Jawa songs enabled urban Javanese listeners to affectively reconnect with their Javanese cultural history (Cooper 2015). Among urban Javanese in contemporary Indonesia, *langgam Jawa* continues to evoke a kind of nostalgia that is not necessarily tied to personal history, but rather an idyllic past that urbanized Javanese never experienced directly. By investigating a localized Javanese example of music and nostalgia, my dissertation project will contribute to nostalgia studies across geographic and social contexts in Asia (Kelly 1986; Ivy 1995; Ferry 2003; Hillenbrand 2010) as well as the way nostalgia emerges in these contexts surrounding popular music (Yano 2002; Barendregt & Van Zanten 2002; Suryadi 2003; Baulch 2012, 2020) and traditional music (Williams 2001, 2006).

Based on my field research, the majority of musicians and listeners who choose *langgam Jawa* are Javanese speakers and come from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. Surakarta hosts an overall Islamic majority (78.66%).³⁰ The majority of the musicians I worked with practiced Islam and remaining minority practiced Christianity, Catholicism, or occasionally a Javanese spiritual tradition known as *kejawèn*. Most listeners are male and between their late 30s

³⁰ "Kota Surakarta Dalam Angka 2020". www.surakartakota.bps.go.id. Retrieved March 15, 2024.

and early 50s. I have seen some tendencies in terms of age depending on the genre that a particular person gravitates toward. For instance, musicians who play *langgam Jawa kroncong* tend to be a little older than musicians who play *campur sari*. These tendencies, however, are blurry because some *kroncong* musicians embed rhythmic accents or musical riffs from *campur sari* into their renditions of these pieces. Further, it is common for *langgam Jawa* singers to perform with *gamelan*, *campur sari*, and *kroncong* ensembles, sometimes even in the same night.

In his 2012 book about gesture in Hindustani music, Matthew Rahaim wrote, “The broad, diverse worlds of Indian music could not possibly be exhausted by the specific, situated claims I make about musical gesture and the several dozen examples given in this small work” (6). In the same way, I am aware that the complex, overlapping but distinct social worlds around *kroncong*, *campur sari*, and *gamelan* as they relate to *langgam Jawa* could never be completely captured in a single dissertation. In each chapter, I aim to dig deep into a specific, situated iteration of these social worlds. The deeply contextual nature of performance, in this case *langgam Jawa*, is what gives the music its meaning. By providing a detailed ethnography that is grounded in historical background, I show the interplay among social context, repertoire, and genre and I highlight the role of people in this interplay. Drawing on the age-old metaphor, however, I can only hope to show a few small parts of the elephant and never its entirety.

1.2 Langgam Jawa and Place

People who are ethnically Javanese comprise the largest ethnolinguistic group in what is the world’s fourth most populous nation and *langgam Jawa* repertoire is geared to them. *Langgam*

Jawa repertoire is played and enjoyed by many Javanese speakers in Central Java, by members of the Javanese diaspora worldwide. Yet, sometimes people who do not speak Javanese also say that they enjoy this music. For example, at an event in Washington D.C. on October 6th 2021, one audience member from West Java said that hearing *langgam Jawa* was nostalgic for him even though he was not fluent in Javanese language. For this research, however, I have chosen to focus my study on Surakarta, shown in Figure 1. This city has both regional and national significance. Indonesia's outgoing president as of 2024, Joko Widodo, served as mayor of Surakarta from 2005 to 2012. Surakarta is nationally recognized as a cultural center and people in Java that I



Figure 1: Figure 1: A map of Java with a star for Surakarta, my main field site, and points for Semarang and Yogyakarta which are my secondary field sites.

have spoken to call Surakarta a stronghold of traditional arts, comparing it to the more experimental arts scene of Yogyakarta.³¹

³¹ Solo's slogan is "Solo the Spirit of Java" (in English) and result from the Pemerintah Kota (Pemkot) Solo competition in 2006 which was won by Dwi Endang Setyorini (Murtono 2013).

Other cities in Central Java could be eligible for a similar study, particularly Yogyakarta since many musicians have told me it is the center of *campur sari*. I went to Yogyakarta and Semarang frequently during my time in Java to conduct interviews and participate in events such as Pasar Keroncong Kotagede in Yogyakarta and Keroncong Generasi 2017 in Semarang with Endah Laras. As such, I consider Semarang and Yogyakarta to be important secondary field sites in this study. Surakarta, however, is considered by many Javanese people to be the center [I. *pusat*] of *kroncong* in Java in addition to hosting *campur sari* and *gamelan* performances regularly. It is also home to Waldjinah, still one of the most famous singers of *langgam Jawa* repertoire, and was home to Andjar Any, arguably the most important composer of this repertoire. One of my interlocutors is Surakarta-based singer Endah Laras, a rising star in *kroncong*, who often includes *langgam Jawa* in her performances and recordings.

Surakarta is home to over 536,235 people as of 2024,³² and consists of five districts (Laweyan, Serengan, Pasar Kliwon, Jebres and Banjarsari) that constitute around 604 villages or *rukun warga* (RW).³³ Supanggah (2003) estimates that in the year 2000 nearly every RW in Surakarta had at least one *campur sari* ensemble meaning that in 2000 there were over 600 *campur sari* groups. According to *kroncong* teacher and master Pak Sapto Haryono, Surakarta has at least one *kroncong* group for every RW, all 604 of them, today. This information is anecdotal, of course, as it would be difficult to assess precisely how many *kroncong* and *campur sari* groups are active in Surakarta. It is hard to believe that a city as small as Surakarta could support this many groups, but it is important to distinguish here that the vast majority of these groups do not play professionally; rather, these are school groups and community groups. In my observation, most of

³² <https://populationstat.com/indonesia/surakarta>.

³³ https://sippa.ciptakarya.pu.go.id/sippa_online/ws_file/dokumen/rpi2jm/DOCRPIJM_15118297832._BAB_II_Profil_Kota_Surakarta_Laporan_Akhir_Final.pdf.

these groups play socially in the context of rehearsals [I. *latihan*] which are for and by other musicians. *Latihan* are a social activity for and by musicians as opposed to staged performances for audiences.

1.3 Theoretical Overview

For this theoretical framework I draw from studies of genre, gender theory, voice studies, and studies of nostalgia in order to better understand the nature of performance practices of *langgam Jawa* and porous boundaries between the categories of genre and repertoire.

1.3.1 Genre Studies

My aim is to highlight practice and experience in my approach to genre. I focus on the way that musicians perceive and perform differences across genre in social space. While I do consider the top-down definitions of genre prescribed by record labels, my research is largely informed by ethnographic work with the musicians themselves. Following Holt (2007), my interest is largely in genre cultures which is a means of considering music in social space.

A literature review of “*langgam Jawa*,” regardless of whether it relates to *kroncong*, *campur sari*, or *gamelan*, yields relatively few results dealing directly with the topic. Some scholars discuss *kroncong* using equal-tempered, diatonic tuning sung in Indonesian language but only a few of these works engage with *langgam Jawa kroncong* (Yampolsky 1991, 2013;

Sugiyanto 2003; Skelchy 2015) or focus exclusively on *langgam Jawa kroncong* (Nuswantoro 2013; Riaseyeni 2013, McGraw 2022). Very little has been written about *campur sari*. At present I have been able to access one Indonesian-language undergraduate manuscript (Wasono 1999), a chapter from an Indonesian-language book that otherwise focuses on the singer Didi Kempot (Nurcholish and Muzakkar 2022), a few English-language scholarly articles (Supanggih 2003; Sutton 2013; Cooper 2015), and a chapter from an English-language book that otherwise focuses on *wayang kulit*³⁴ (Mrázek 2005). These sources are useful in providing context including some historical information, discographic information, and details regarding the musical idioms of this repertoire. There is little ethnographic work on the repertoire of *langgam Jawa* and the genres of *kroncong* and *campur sari* with the exception of Mrázek (2005), Cooper (2015), and Skelchy (2015). My approach will be unique in that it will be an ethnography grounded in historical context that focuses specifically on the repertoire of *langgam Jawa* across the genres of *campur sari*, *kroncong*, and *gamelan*.

In this dissertation, I approach *langgam Jawa* as a single repertoire and investigate the ways that it is performed uniquely within each genre, but I recognize that the boundaries of these two concepts, repertoire and genre, are slippery. Some of my interlocutors conceive of *langgam Jawa* the way I do, as a 32-bar song form, while for others it is more of a style and a meeting of certain expectations regarding timbre, language, and instrumentation. When my interlocutors describe *langgam Jawa* as a style, they point to the vocal timbre used during performances, the use of Javanese language, and the approximation of *slendro* and *pelog* tuning systems or the use of *gamelan* instruments. Noryuliyanti et al. write that the word “*langgam*” means style or way as

³⁴ *Wayang kulit* is shadow puppet theater typical but not exclusive to Central Java. *Wayang kulit* uses flat puppets cut from water-buffalo hide.

in way of being while “*Jawa*” refers to a geographic place (2021, 140). Elements like “style” are particularly slippery as they are highly subjective and there often is not precise language to describe elements of style, but they are an important part of what builds discourses around “genre.” The same is true of “timbre;” even professional musicians struggle to describe timbre, and yet it is so foundational to musical work and performative dimensions of genre.

It is more common, especially in earlier studies, for research in ethnomusicology take a single genre or tradition as a focus. What I aim to do in my research is look at a repertoire across genres which I anticipate will reveal an original approach to musical genres in terms of the way they are performed and their malleability. A few examples of this approach includes Yampolsky’s work investigating 10 different versions of a song called “*Hati Yang Luka*” (1989), Manuel and Marshall’s work on the recycling of rhythm “riddim” in Jamaican dancehall (2006), works like Justin A. Williams’ that analyze the repurposing of jazz and beats in hip hop music (2013), or Weintraub’s work examining the creative appropriation and resignification of Beatles’ repertoire by local musicians in Indonesia (2021). Similar to these works, I will be examining a single repertoire of songs and looking at the way they are repurposed and recycled by Javanese musicians and listeners across several musical genres.

This dissertation contributes to scholarship regarding musical genre (Holt 2007), but especially scholarship focusing on musical genres in Indonesia (Wallach 2008; Weintraub 2010; *Asian Music* special issue on genre in Indonesian music ed. Wallach and Clinton 2013; Sutton 2013; Baulch 2020). In this dissertation I investigate the way one repertoire can be heard across three genres: *kroncong*, *campur sari*, and *gamelan*. I follow Weintraub in approaching genre not only as “a fixed set of elements marked by sameness” but also as a “discursive practice that represents difference and social struggles over meaning” (2010, 12). Musical meaning arises not

from content but instead from use and discursive practice (Foucault, 1972). I approach genre as a discursive formation, as a circulating group of statements, whether written or spoken, that come together to form a “general enunciative system” that refer to the same object (Foucault 1972, 110). Following Fabian Holt, I aim to *understand* genre rather than *define* it in this dissertation (2008, 9). Definitions serve practical purposes and illuminate the way that people understand music. At the same time, definitions create boundaries and often have a more static nature than the dynamic processes they describe. Instead of focusing on generating fixed definitions, I aim to highlight practice and experience. Holt cautions against scholarly definitions becoming the “rule and not the tool” (2008,15) because these definitions may be perceived as a property of the music itself. Further, these definitions are at risk of eliminating the agency of listening publics and the musicians involved.

Following Frith and Negus, Holt uses the term “genre culture” to refer to the overall identity of cultural formations which constitute genre (2008, 19) “Genres are identified not only with music, but also with certain cultural values, rituals, practices, territories, traditions, and groups of people” (Ibid.) When the same *langgam Jawa* song is used in notably different social contexts, each with distinct performance practices, the fluid nature of genre is illuminated. *Langgam Jawa* songs originally composed for *kroncong* ensembles are repurposed in *campur sari* ensembles and vice versa. For instance, in Chapter 2 I will discuss the way that Campur Sari Sangga Buana performs the song “*Caping Gunung*,” a song originally composed by Gesang Martohartono for *kroncong* ensembles. Meanwhile during my fieldwork, I saw *kroncong* groups such as Cahaya Irama play “*Lali Janjine*,” a song composed by S. Harsono for *campur sari* ensembles. When Cahaya Irama plays *langgam Jawa* songs that are typically performed by or composed for *campur*

sari ensembles, they often incorporate rhythmic elements or synchronized melodies that may not otherwise appear in performances.

Another example of this exchange is *gaya selo kendhang* or *selo*-style drumming sometimes used in *gamelan* settings of *langgam Jawa* (see Standiford, Sugiyanto & Suyoto 2024). The plucked *selo* in *langgam Jawa kroncong* was originally inspired by *kendhang* drumming for Javanese *gamelan* and uses slaps or taps on the body of the *selo* that are not used in other *kroncong* repertoires (Yampolsky 1991). Despite imitating the *kendhang*, the rhythmic patterns for *selo* playing in *langgam Jawa* are distinct (see McGraw 2022), and the techniques used are different because of the limitations and affordances of each instrument. *Selo* players can produce a musical pitch by playing the strings or produce rhythmic sounds by striking the strings or the body of the *selo*. The *kendhang*, however, only allows for rhythmic sounds although approximations of musical pitches can be made by tuning the drum heads. Yet, by the 1960s, Ki Nartosabdho had developed a style of *kendhang* playing that imitates the *selo*, often called *kendhang gaya selo*, bringing this musical exchange full circle. Certain repertoire, such as *langgam Jawa*, and musical elements, such as drumming patterns, associated with these three genres are often exchanged and repurposed.

Indonesia is a nation consisting of 13,466 islands³⁵ and over 700 local languages and ethnicities.³⁶ Therefore the formation of the nation-state necessarily entailed creating a national identity made up of pre-existing regional identities. Scholars including Yampolsky (1991, 2013), Barendregt and Van Zanten (2002) Weintraub (2010), and Sutton (2013) often discuss music

³⁵“Hanya ada 13.466 Pulau di Indonesia.” 2012. <https://web.archive.org/web/20171228035556/http://nationalgeographic.co.id/berita/2012/02/hanya-ada-13466-pulau-di-indonesia>

³⁶ <https://www.ethnologue.com/insights/countries-most-languages/>

organization by distinguishing between “national” and “regional” music genres although Weintraub challenges and blurs these boundaries. Yampolsky writes that in Indonesia, distinguishing between the national and regional is crucial because: “what is national—Indonesian language, mass media, government, the educational system—unites the country, and what is regional—local loyalties, languages, customs, music—has the potential to fragment it” (1991, 1). *Langgam Jawa* as played by *kroncong* and *campur sari* ensembles would be considered a “regional” form by this definition. Bart Barendregt and Wim van Zanten make a further distinction between “regional” and “ethnic” music (2002). They describe “regional” music, such as *pop Minang* or *pop Jawa*, as tending to subsume aspects of Western music and as being mass-mediated while ethnic music, such as *kacapi-suling* or *saluang dendang*, is thought to be more “pure” (2002, 70).

Yampolsky describes the way that, from the 1950s to 1970s, these two divisions were part of the discursive formations from the national recording company Lokananta referring to their own music production (2013). Yampolsky argues that popular music is Indonesia’s only “national” music in the way that it “crosses regional, ethnic and religious boundaries” (Yampolsky 2001). Indonesia hosts a number of traditional genres, but none of these have widespread, national appeal. Weintraub offers a useful complication of this national versus regional distinction with two terms that he uses to describe localized versions of *dangdut*, another Indonesian popular music, that emerged in the post-Suharto era. Weintraub uses the term “nationalized regionality” to refer to regional expressions in nationally circulated music, and “regionalized nationality” for *dangdut* which is marketed to ethnic groups and their diasporas (2010, 203). *Langgam Jawa kroncong* could be considered a kind of “regionalized nationality” in that this repertoire uses a national form (*kroncong*) in a way that is marketable to people who are ethnically Javanese. Although *langgam*

Jawa contains elements of traditional music, it is mass-mediated and subsumes elements of Western song forms (the 32-bar structure) and tuning systems (equal-tempered diatonic as opposed to the *slendro* or *pelog* tunings of the *gamelan*). In this way, splitting up genres between the terms “national” or “regional” does not entirely capture the entwinement of these two categories.

Hybridity is also a key concept for this project, particularly for studies of *kroncong* and *campur sari* which can both be considered hybrid genres. R. Anderson Sutton offers important insights into the nature of musical hybridity, observing a seemingly contradictory nature of genre and hybridity and positing that genre often connotes a fixed set of elements and hybridity necessarily entails a combination of elements. Sutton, however, draws on scholars like Deborah Kapchan and Pauline Strong in pointing out that genre cannot truly entail a fixed set of elements precisely because it is subject to interpretation and social construction. Sutton posits that hybridity “involves the intentional mixing of elements developed in separate semiotic worlds, or a process whose result is perceivable as such a mix” (2013, 84).³⁷ On the other hand, Sarah Weiss questions how separate these semiotic worlds can be. She claims it is a “political act to enjoy a hybrid” (2008, 205) citing the potential conflict surrounding the hybrid work and authenticity as well as contestations regarding the materials of culture bearers that may have been used in the work. By operating in an interstitial space, a hybrid work “challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by the originary Past” (Bhabha 1994, 37), disrupting narratives of linear traditions and authenticity. I contend that genre, too, entails a combination of elements that are constantly being reinterpreted and shaped by both musicians and listeners.

³⁷ The word “intentional” also bears examination here because people often mix things without an intended result.

1.3.2 Gender Studies

Gender is at the heart of this study although the project is not limited to questions of gender alone. An understanding of the gendered roles assigned to men and women in Javanese society is necessary for understanding social life in Java. As such, I approach gender as an important aspect of questions of nostalgia. In this dissertation, I will attend to the influence of gender in the performance and meaning of *langgam Jawa* in Surakarta. I am fortunate in the sense that many scholars have already explored issues of gender in Java, however, I anticipate that my observations will reveal different nuances. While I take Surakarta to be my focus, my aim is to reveal ways of understanding connections between gender and nostalgia in any location.

Scholarship centering women's participation in music in Indonesia began appearing in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Sutton 1987, Cooper 1994, Walton 1996) but far greater attention has been given to the topic in the past twenty or so years (Williams 2001, Weiss 2007, Weintraub 2008, Rasmussen 2010, Skelchy 2015, Weintraub 2017, Downing 2020, Decker 2021). The pieces from Skelchy and Weintraub are of particular interest to this project because they show how women's vocal performance both embodied and challenged images of modernity and femininity that the Indonesian government sought to promote. Skelchy's dissertation focuses on the life and career of Java's most famous *langgam Jawa* singer, Waldjinhah. Skelchy demonstrates the parallels between the singer's career and the formation of Indonesia as a nation-state. Waldjinhah was a nationally renowned artist and was best known for performing a genre (*kroncong*) that was promoted by the new Indonesian government while specializing in the *langgam Jawa* repertoire. Waldjinhah always aimed to appear politically neutral and avoid public expressions of political opinion, yet she also appeared in Golkar political campaign rallies, carefully negotiating a public persona in support of the Suharto regime. Waldjinhah penned several of her own songs including

“*Walang Kekek*,” (“Grasshopper”)³⁸ which my interlocuters tell me is her most well-known song.³⁹ Skelchy’s work provides important background information not only on the repertoire of *langgam Jawa* itself but also regarding the interconnected nature between this repertoire and Indonesian politics.

Another work detailing the entwinement of a female singer, albeit not a *langgam Jawa* singer, and the Indonesian nation-state is Andrew Weintraub’s chapter from *Vamping the Stage: Female Voices of Asian Modernities* (2017). Weintraub analyzes several songs by Titiiek Puspa, an Indonesian pop singer and composer, looking at the way she sounded modernity over the span of two political orders. Titiiek Puspa, like Waldjinhah, is one of only a few female composers of Indonesian popular music and has penned over five hundred songs mostly in a Western-influenced genre known as *hiburan*. The lyrics of one of Puspa’s best-known songs, “*Kupu-kupu malam*” (“Night Butterfly”),⁴⁰ express compassion for a female sex worker, running counter to norms of New Order modernity. Weintraub explains that her success is based on her ability to “adapt to changing social conditions and top-down power,” noting that the multiple “voices” she projected in her songs were essential through crisis in the 1960s and during the restrictions on women under the New Order in the 1970s (2017, 167).

It will also be important to examine masculinity in this project as the majority of musicians and composers of *langgam Jawa* are men. Several scholarly sources (Becker 1975; Lockhard 1998; Ferzacca 2006, 2012; Skelchy 2015; Suadi 2017) discuss the archetype of *buaya kroncong* (*kroncong* “crocodile”). Becker describes *buaya kroncong* as dashing yet dangerous model of

³⁸ A *walang kekek* is a very specific type of grasshopper. *Walang* simply means “grasshopper” and *kekek* refers to a specific type of dark brown grasshopper

³⁹ According to Skelchy, this song went to the top of the charts nationally (Skelchy 2015, 325) but without a metric like the Billboard Top 100, this is difficult to quantify.

⁴⁰ “Night Butterfly” is a euphemism for a female sex worker.

masculinity, often seen drinking and seducing women, particularly associated with *kroncong* in the early half of the 20th century.

Steve Ferzacca (2006, 2012) offers two explorations of masculinity as it appears in *kroncong* rehearsals. Ferzacca discusses a series of *kroncong* rehearsals in his neighborhood in Yogyakarta where he did fieldwork in the 1990s. He claims that for these male musicians, the music in the neighborhood was about “making gender through an expressive form that seeks recognition in the context of changing relationships between men and women” (2006, 346). Women are usually stay-at-home mothers. Ferzacca notes that mothering is moving increasingly into the public sphere, formerly a male-dominated space, citing New Order policies that emphasized the role of stay-at-home mothers and community welfare workers (2006, 347). Ferzacca describes the traditional *buaya kroncong* archetype as a dangerous, marginal one, more available to lower-class men than wealthy aristocrats. He shows the way that the male musicians in these rehearsals sought recognition for their expression of this kind of “Javanese machismo” (2006, 351) but these expressions were underappreciated in the community. For these male musicians, the rehearsals were a way to take back the public sphere. Ferzacca’s work is important as it illuminates some of the expressions of masculinity at play in the project, serving as an important contrast to my focus on gendered expressions of women. The term *buaya kroncong*, however, has new associations that Ferzacca does not describe. For example, Waldjinhah told me that *buaya kroncong* now refers to someone who is enthusiastic about *kroncong*.⁴¹ This is an example of the way that entrenched archetypes shift over time, suggesting broader shifts in masculinity and femininity in performances of *kroncong* and *langgam Jawa* more broadly.

⁴¹ Waldjinhah, interview with the author, May 4th 2018.

In this dissertation, gender and sexuality under the New Order are issues of importance because *langgam Jawa* was at the peak of its circulation during this regime. I will discuss three topics related to these issues, namely a specific government regulation from 1983, the so-called “family principle,” and State Ibuism (State Motherism), a term coined by Julia Suryakusuma to describe the relationship between women and the state in Indonesia. Particularly during the New Order, the marital and therefore sexual life of civil servants was subjected to state control. Government regulation (*Peraturan Pemerintah* [PP]) 10/1983 deals largely with regulating marriage and divorce for civil servants.⁴² Julia Suryakusuma writes that regulations such as this one are, “inspired by the reasoning that, as civil servants represent the state, they should uphold the principles of the state and set an example for the rest of society” (1996, 92). In this way, the New Order instrumentalized the sexual conduct of civil servants, which was seen as signal of moral integrity, to legitimize the state. Civil servants were tasked as moral role models for the rest of society.

Another important principle relating to gender and sexuality under the New Order was the “family principle” [*I. asas keluarga*, alternatively *azas keluarga*]. Suharto’s New Order regime pressed people to place the interests of the state before their own and promoting a blind loyalty towards the state (Aspinall 2005, 23). The “family principle” defined the state as a harmonious family. In an essay written during the New Order, Suryakusuma writes, “Paternalism infuses Indonesian social organization and relationships, with President Suharto as the ultimate *bapak*, or father figure. Civil servants refer to their male superiors as *bapak*. Strong paternalistic strains in Javanese political culture, marked by deference to power and authority, coincide with military

⁴² BAKN [Badan Administrasi Kepegawaian Negeri, State Civil Service Administration Body]. *Peraturan Pemerintah (PP) Nomor 10 Tahun 1983 tentang Izin Perkawinan Dan Perceraian Bagi Pegawai Negeri Sipil*. <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Details/64898/pp-no-10-tahun-1983>

norms of hierarchy and obedience to the command” (1996, 95). These values were pervasive under the New Order and the influence of these policies continues today. Suzanne Brenner writes that, at this time, “home [was] being transformed into the site of a reified domesticity where loyal and docile citizen-consumers are produced” (1998, 238). However, Brenner also shows that these paternalistic hierarchies are complex and ambiguous. Women in Laweyan, a village in the city of Surakarta, were historically the main producers of wealth and cultural value, and Brenner traces a shift towards the Indonesian state as the main producer of wealth and cultural value (1998). In some contexts, men are viewed as having more passion or desire [*I. nafsu*] than women and are perceived to be less capable of controlling that desire, particularly in regards to money. Women held power in protecting the social status of their families by controlling the wealth within households.

Julia Suryakusuma defines State Ibuism as, “the domestication of Indonesian women as dependent wives who exist for their husbands, their families, and the state” (1996, 98). Suryakusuma posits that Dharma Wanita, the civil servants wives’ association in Indonesia, espouses the ideology of State Ibuism, promoting women as appendages of their husbands and the state. Based on the *Panca Dharma Wanita* (Fives Responsibilities of Women), “State Ibuism defines women as appendages and companions to their husbands, as procreators of the nation, as mothers and educators of children, as housekeepers, and as members of Indonesian society—in that order” (Suryakusuma 1996, 101). The second chapter and fourth chapters examine performances that were sponsored by Golkar and will look at the way that ideologies like State Ibuism impacted these performances.

In considering performances of both masculinity and femininity, I find Butler’s concept of gender performativity, the notion that gender is reiteratively *done*, to be useful (2006 [1995]).

Butler's theory is linked with J.L. Austin's work on the notion of the performative and starts not from the notion that gender is biologically determined, but rather that it emerges through repeated performances that are fluid and context-dependent. Drawing on Simone de Beauvoir, Butler writes, "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (2006, 45). Further, approaching gender as a performance will help me in observing situations where performances do *not* fall into this binary, such as the ways that performers break the "rules" of gendered performativity. In this project, I follow Butler in thinking of gender as not just something that is repeatedly performed on stage, but also through the bodily comportment and everyday social interactions.

1.3.3 Voice Studies

The current field of voice studies can be traced to the late 1990s and was driven by discipline-specific goals (Eidsheim & Meizel 2019, xv). As an example, studies in vocal pedagogy were driven specifically by the goal of teaching voice. By the 2010s, scholarship on voice had increased significantly (Fisher 2010, Cavarero 2012, Hellier 2013, Elliott 2015, Feldman 2015, Weidman 2017) and began to demonstrate synthesis among disciplines (Kreiman & Sidtis 2011, Eidsheim 2015). From the end of the 2010s until now, studies of voice have become increasingly multidisciplinary and may combine vocal pedagogy, performance studies, cultural studies, and the sciences. This span of interrelations is what Eidsheim and Meizel, among others, now refer to as voice studies (Eidsheim & Meizel 2019, xviii). I follow Ruth Hellier's framework (2013) to attend both embodied material voice and the voice in terms of metaphor or "having a voice," what she

calls “the interface of the literal singing voice and the metaphorical voice” (2013, 5). The physicality of women’s voices is the basis for the metaphor of “having a voice,” voices they have historically been denied (Dunn & Jones 1994, 1). Ironically, it is an abstracted voice, a disembodied voice, that stands in for expression and agency. In Western philosophy, agency is deeply linked to the voice and a binary is often presented between “having a voice” and being silenced (Weidman 2006, 148). However, it is often the case in *langgam Jawa* that women’s singing voices are public and highly audible (they “have a voice” in the public sphere) yet not agentive in the conventional sense (they are not able to voice their opinions freely). This is not to downplay the creative agency of women singers, but instead to draw attention to the importance of societal forces in shaping singing voices. Amanda Weidman notes that voices are also “deeply felt markers of class, race, geographical origin, etc” (2014, 40). For instance, *langgam Jawa* singers in the context of a *campur sari* performance have creative agency in terms of what musical embellishments they use, but their voices are also shaped by external forces such as societal expectations of timbre or limitations necessary in order to sing into a microphone. There are many forces at play, whether technological, cultural, or political, that shape the singing voices of women. Creative agency is necessarily entangled with such societal forces.

Women Singers in Global Contexts: Music, Biography, Identity (2013), edited by Hellier, marked an expansion in research concerning women’s voices in non-Western contexts, but only a few of the included essays feature ethnographic work in Asia. *Vamping the Stage: Female Voices of Asian Modernities* (2017), edited by Andrew Weintraub and Bart Barendregt, is relevant to this project as it is the first volume on focusing on women’s voices exclusively in Asian contexts. For example, Tan Sooi Beng’s chapter in *Vamping the Stage* illustrates the voicing of vernacular modernity, distinct from the modernity promoted by the British, that emerged in colonial Malaya

in the first half of the twentieth century. In this context, Malay Muslim women were contained to domestic spheres but a small group of women were able to form careers as singers, entering the public sphere and forming an alternative kind of modernity. The author notes that women were excluded from many aspects of music production in the gramophone industry, yet they played important roles in building audiences and building the overall success of the industry. This resonates with my research in Central Java where women are historically underrepresented in many facets of music production yet are often featured as powerful singers and performers. Further, this chapter illustrates the way that Malay women performers are able to challenge socially constructed boundaries and blend elements of tradition and modernity in their voices and song lyrics, resonating once again with women singing *langgam Jawa* in Central Java that I have observed.

In her 2015 book, Nina Eidsheim writes that both male and female vocalists labor to make a piece discernible within the confines of a particular genre, usually by producing what is perceived as the appropriate timbre for the repertoire. She asks, “how is vocal labor recruited to maintain a piece’s identity and status?” (2015, 134). She describes how Luciano Pavarotti’s version of “My Way” may not retain its status as torch song⁴³ in the same way as when Frank Sinatra sings it based on the timbre that these singers use in their respective performances. In this way, the recognizability of a given genre depends largely on timbre which in turn depends on the labor of the singer. I find this to be true with women singers of *langgam Jawa* who are front and center in the production and spread of this repertoire and whose vocal labor is crucial in maintaining the identity of each distinct genre. At the same time, it is not only women’s vocal timbre that distinguishes genre; it is also the varying timbres of the instruments whether stringed instruments

⁴³ A torch song is a sentimental ballad.

in *kroncong* ensembles or pitched percussion instruments in *gamelan* ensembles and perhaps most importantly, the social context of each the performance.

Singers of *langgam Jawa* often switch among the timbral expectations of genres, in this case *campur sari*, *gamelan*, and *kroncong*, in which this repertoire appears. Using Eidsheim's concepts of vocal labor in timbre production, I will examine the ways that women's vocal practice was, and continues to be, central to sonically bridging regional Javanese identity, and national, Indonesian identity. Women singers in Central Java are able to switch between timbres and use these timbres to maintain the complex identities associated with these genres. Instead of naming a fixed identity category for each genre, the chapters of this dissertation will circumscribe situated aspects of vocal timbre, performances practice, clothing, and bodily comportment that Javanese singers associate and use while performing particular genres. The production of these timbres and switching among the vocal timbres associated with *campur sari*, *gamelan* and *kroncong* singing respectively, falls largely but not exclusively on the shoulders of women. In other words, the constant vocal work needed to distinguish genres is gendered in this instance and often goes unmarked.

1.3.4 Nostalgia

In October of 2019, singer Endah Laras opened a performance at an intimate house concert in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania by opening her arms wide and saying, in English, "Let's get nostalgic together!" What made her decide to open the concert this way? Did she assume that some audience members, a handful of whom were Indonesian, might associate her repertoire of *kroncong* and *langgam Jawa* songs with nostalgia? Or was she cueing non-Indonesian audience members as to

the associations of this music? Or perhaps she herself was nostalgic for her own faraway home in Surakarta, Java?

Theories of nostalgia are essential to my framework as my interlocuters associate *langgam Jawa* with nostalgia [I. *nostalgi/nostalgia*] and a sense of longing [I/J. *kangen*]. Further, nostalgia is evident in the texts, costumes, and settings used in performances of *langgam Jawa*. For example, content producers of *campur sari* music videos on Youtube use elements of pastness, evoking a sense of longing [I/J. *kangen*] and nostalgia for viewers. Further, nostalgia can be seen in the way that viewers respond to and engage with these nostalgic elements. Many *campursari* videos and playlists on Youtube use the words “nostalgia” or “*kangen*” directly in the title such as: “Campursari NONSTOP Nostalgia 90 Menit.” The text in one video suggests preserving pastness through the electronic pop music and reads “Let’s Preserve *Campursari*, Our Ancestral Heritage” [I. “*Mari Lestarikan Campursari Warisan Leluhur*”].⁴⁴ Other videos, while not explicitly using these words in associated text, use costumes and settings that conjure “pastness” in Central Java. Singers in these videos often wear traditional *kebaya*⁴⁵ or *blangkon*,⁴⁶ albeit with atraditional colors or cuts, and they perform in idyllic, pastoral settings in the Javanese countryside. These videos often feature scenes of rice fields and lush mountains accompanied by the danceable beats and synthesized melodies of *campursari*. Viewers remark in the comments to these videos that the music reminds them of their childhood or that they hope to preserve Javanese cultural heritage.

Svetlana Boym writes that nostalgia “is a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed. Nostalgia is a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also a romance with one’s own fantasy” (2000, xiii). Boym distinguishes between two kinds of nostalgia: restorative and

⁴⁴ <https://youtu.be/bdyoM8WbQJ4?si=pqj2h6aBQTxm3MS7>.

⁴⁵ A *kebaya* is upper garment traditionally worn by women in Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia.

⁴⁶ A *blangkon* is a type of headgear made of batik fabric and worn by men in Java.

reflective. Nostalgia is a compound word from Greek, consisting of *nostos* (homecoming) and *algos* (pain). Restorative nostalgia focuses on *nostos*; reconstructing the past as truth, not as a romantic notion but a new reality. Reflective nostalgia languishes in *algos* and is characterized by longing, cherishing the romantic decay of the past. Restorative nostalgia tends to manifest as revival, nationalist revival in the case that Boym describes. Reflective nostalgia, however, is characterized by individual and cultural memory. These two kinds of nostalgia “are not absolute types, but rather tendencies, ways of giving shape and meaning to longing” (Boym, 2001, p. 42).

I find that the way musicians and listeners use *langgam Jawa* stretches the framework of restorative and reflective nostalgia outlined by Boym. On the one hand, many musicians and listeners encourage rule-abiding, standard [I/J. *pakem*] interpretations of *langgam Jawa*, manifesting Boym’s concept of restorative nostalgia. On the other hand, the repertoire of *langgam Jawa* has been modern and innovative from its inception, upsetting notions of restoration. When *langgam Jawa* repertoire first emerged in *kroncong* ensembles, it referred to the ancient tradition of *gamelan* yet in the packaging of an ensemble with modern appeal. The same held true as *campur sari* became popular in the early 1990s. At the same time, much of the packaging of *langgam Jawa* albums and the language used for Youtube videos and promotional materials reveals elements of reflective nostalgia, longing for a Javanese pastness and drawing on idyllic images of the Javanese countryside.

Perhaps just as importantly as what *kind* of nostalgia is being examined, I also follow Christine Yano in asking *who*, exactly, is doing the remembering? (2002, 4-6). Her work on an early 20th century Japanese ballad genre known as *enka* resonates strongly with my research. She shows the way that *enka* is connected deeply with nostalgia, showing the way that sentiment creates timelessness, and the way this music is part of the construction of a particular kind of

national identity for Japanese people. Yano describes *enka* fans as typically middle-aged, working-class, and more often rural than urban dwellers (2002, 1-2). The nostalgic “Japan” that is featured in *enka* songs is built by a collective memory framed by a longing for the “*furusato*” or “hometown” (Yano 2002, 17) mirroring the idyllic countryside appearing in the lyrics of many *langgam Jawa* songs. Yano also asks *when* nostalgia begins to be associated with *enka*, mirroring my own questions of *when* nostalgia begins to be associated with *langgam Jawa*. My initial interviews suggest that the nostalgia associated with *langgam Jawa* depends somewhat on the genre in which it is being heard. For example, Surakarta-resident and musician Adi Wasono told me that *langgam Jawa* played in the style of *campur sari* musician Mantous “reminds one of the rise of the genre. Music with Javanese nuances or you could say pop were very widespread at that time.”⁴⁷ The feeling of nostalgia that Wasono associated with this music had to do with the emergence of the genre as opposed to the much older traditional elements that can be heard in the music.

Skelchy asks, “what happens when nostalgia replaces the ‘development’ of a genre” (2015, 43). The question itself suggests that nostalgia and development are a kind of binary, that the former causes stagnation and the latter is privileged with opportunity and potential. I counter this question by asking if the association of certain genres with nostalgia necessarily precludes the potential for development? Just the act of repurposing, for example in the use of song lyrics describing fields and agriculture in Central Java, take on new meanings in new contexts. When *langgam Jawa* first emerged, lyrics with agricultural themes would have been more likely to reflect everyday life for people living in Surakarta. These same lyrics performed now, however, take on

⁴⁷ Adi Wasono, personal communication with the author, April 3rd, 2022. “*Mantous [sic] itu mengingatkan bangkitnya genre. Musik yang bernuansa jawa secara umum atau bisa dibilang pop yang sangat merebak pada waktu itu.*”

a different valence for people living in increasingly urbanized spaces in Surakarta. Instead of reflecting their own everyday lives, my interlocuters tell me that these lyrics remind them of their grandparents.

Critics who perceive nostalgia negatively may see it as leading to stagnation or as a retreat from history. “Nostalgia irritates its critics because it seems to harbour so much potential for an affective reckoning with the past but more often than not elects to squander that promise in an excess of retro schmaltz” (Hillenbrand 2010, 383). I follow Ange and Berliner in thinking of nostalgia as a force that *does* something as opposed to being a mere pastime of idle romantics (2015). Ange and Berliner describe one function of nostalgia as “the reification of social identities and the production of cultural boundaries in context of important changes” (2015, 10), supporting my examination of *langgam Jawa* as a repertoire that reifies regional identity for Javanese people. This project will further contribute to studies analyzing the ways that local, ethnolinguistic groups in Indonesia use popular music as an expression of longing for a receding past that is deeply tied to a sense of place. Studies by Barendregt & Van Zanten (2002) and Suryadi (2003), for example, analyze the way that Minangkabau people and their music is known for a quality of longing for home. Minangkabau people have long been associated with extensive travel and trade and are known for their tendency to wander [M. *merantau*]. This longing for home has a particular valence for this group of people, distinct from Javanese people, characterized by relocation even before the demands of capitalism made it so common. Sean Williams’ study of a genre of Sundanese chamber music called *tembang Sunda* details a feeling of nostalgia, wistfulness, and longing [S. *waas*] for the premodern, feudal past (2001). Most *langgam Jawa* listeners live in or have migrated from Central Java and lyrics of *langgam Jawa* often feature Central Java through romantic descriptions of nature and village life.

I also follow Appadurai's notion of "imagined nostalgia" (1996, 77), or nostalgia for things that never were, in understanding the ways that *langgam Jawa* can symbolically evoke feelings of regionalism for listeners. Many musicians and listeners in Central Java have told me that the song "Caping Gunung" evokes feelings of nostalgia. For instance, when I took a ride with a GoJek⁴⁸ driver on January 8th 2023, he told me that "Caping Gunung" "returns his thoughts to times past."⁴⁹ The lyrics are from the perspective of a farmer who is missing his son and include references to rural living and farming.⁵⁰ Many of the listeners who feel nostalgic when they hear this song have not had sustained experiences in these rural landscapes, instead living and working most of their lives in urban areas in Central Java. This is an example of nostalgia without memory, nostalgia without direct experience of the music or the history evoked by the lyrics. Appadurai writes that "sentiments, whose greatest force is in their ability to ignite intimacy into a political state and turn locality into a staging ground for identity, have become spread over vast and irregular spaces as groups move yet stay linked to one another through sophisticated media capabilities" (1996, 41). Cultural forms spread vastly and unevenly in the modern world and that "locality is no longer what it used to be" (1996, 11). A localized music like *langgam Jawa* links individuals together through a nostalgia without memory.

⁴⁸ GoJek is an online taxi service similar to Uber or Lyft.

⁴⁹ Anonymous, personal communication, January 8th, 2023. [I/J. "Bali pikiran zaman lalu."].

⁵⁰ Full lyrics and translation for "Caping Gunung" are provided in Chapter 3.

1.4 Methods

The methods for my research focus largely on interviews, participation with local *kroncong* and *campursari* groups, analysis of music and lyrics, and analysis of music videos and videos made for weddings and special events. I conducted my formal fieldwork in 2022-2023 with the support of a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Award. Prior to this I had already spent two years studying music in Indonesia: my first year in 2014-2015 with the support of a Darmasiswa scholarship from the Indonesian Ministry of Culture and Education and my second year in 2017-2018 with the support of a Fulbright Student Research Grant. Much of my study was based in participant-observation which meant observing and playing in music rehearsals. It also meant, however, participating in the events of everyday life such as spending hours at night drinking tea and talking, a kind of “deep hanging out” (attributed to Renato Rosaldo, quoted in Clifford 1996, 5; see also Geertz 1998). Videos made for weddings and special events are useful for analysis because these videos focus on both the performers and the guests of these events, affording an opportunity to observe audience reactions and interactions. I worked most consistently with two *kroncong* groups, namely Cahaya Irama and Swastika, because out of all of the *kroncong* groups I have worked with in Surakarta, these groups play *langgam Jawa* the most consistently.⁵¹ I worked with two *campur sari* groups called Sangga Buana and Mayang Arum. I attended weekly community *gamelan* rehearsals in Surakarta under the direction of Pak Suropto,

During my fieldwork I also continued my musical training in *langgam Jawa* singing as well as lessons in Javanese *kendhang* drumming with my teacher Pak Bambang Siswanto. Continued musical study was critical to this project, as it informed my interviews and placed me

⁵¹ Many *kroncong* groups in Surakarta do not play *langgam Jawa* at all.

in contact with a community of expert musicians. By actively learning and performing the music, I was able to observe more details and variation among performers and participate in events by joining my interlocuters on stage. In this way, I see performance as a tool for research.

I aim to provide a rich contextualization of contemporary narratives as well as practices and meanings surrounding the performance of *langgam Jawa* today. My research will situate *langgam Jawa* historically as a local ethnic music within the cultural politics and modern history of the Indonesian nation-state (post-independence). I take this approach because this repertoire initially formed as a localized, Javanese alternative to the more national, pan-Indonesian repertoires of *kroncong* music. Then *langgam Jawa* was later subsumed by national politics and was used in campaign rallies and for military entertainment. At the same time, Javanese people were shaping this music from below, adding their own contributions and shaping this music in both informal rehearsals and staged performances.

In my both interviews and informal conversations with musicians, I often began by asking my interlocuters to define what *langgam Jawa* meant to them. I conducted several interviews with members of Sangga Buana that were mainly focused on the history of the group, their choice of repertoire, and how they approach their performances. In my interviews with 12 women singers from Central Java who perform *langgam Jawa*, I asked how the singers describe timbre and examine the ways that they learn to produce distinct timbres across the genres in which *langgam Jawa* appears. Were they taught in formal settings or did they learn on their own? What discourses, whether from society or from their teachers, were part of what informed their understanding of appropriate timbres for certain musical genres? I also asked questions about how these women choose to present themselves during staged performances of *langgam Jawa*.

I found that my interlocuters generally used the word song [I. *lagu*] to describe *langgam Jawa* as opposed to repertoire [I. *repetoar*] but would respond affirmatively if I introduced to word repertoire to the conversation. Generally, people whom I spoke with would use the words for the specific genres (*kroncong*, *campur sari*, and *gamelan*) but would occasionally use the word genre before I introduced it to the conversation. The blurriness that I witnessed among genres and repertoire in *langgam Jawa* appeared more often in practice than in conversation. In conversation, my interlocuters would refer directly to the musical ensemble (and corresponding genre) in front of us, but in practice many musicians borrowed *langgam Jawa* songs that had been originally written for another genre. For instance, at Tri Darma gamelan rehearsals, the participants would talk about the gamelan set there and then we played “Yen Ing Tawang” which was originally written for *kroncong* instruments.

Particularly as it relates to my participation in the music described, it is essential to note my positionality as it relates to my research and my relationship with my interlocuters. I have been studying and performing *langgam Jawa* since 2014. My understanding of *langgam Jawa* is informed by my training not only as a singer but also as an instrumentalist. I am formally trained in classical guitar performance and so I was immediately drawn to the stringed instruments in the *kroncong* ensemble. I focused mainly on playing the *cak* which may have informed my attention to musical form. A singer, of course, must also understand the form of the piece that they are singing, but playing what might be considered a rhythm or accompanying instrument in the ensemble drew my attention to form in a unique way. I also have spent time learning not only *sindhengan* but also the instruments of the gamelan to this same effect, paying attention to both voice and musical form.

In 2015, I co-founded a U.S. based *kroncong* group, RumpuT, with Dr. Andy McGraw. This group has toured universities and small venues on the East Coast and did a tour of Java in 2018 which I organized. My position as a foreigner performing this repertoire is both an asset and a challenge. I have been very fortunate in the sense that performance opportunities often connect me with important interlocutors. Further, my performances offer me a means of exchange; sometimes I will perform in a wedding at the request of a musician, for instance, and in return I may ask for some of their time for an interview. When I say my positionality is a challenge, however, I mean that my identity as a white, middle-class, American woman limits the kinds of spaces and information that I have access to, sometimes in ways that are not visible to me. My positionality as a woman may open spaces and relationships with other women in Java, but my positionality as a foreigner inhibits anything resembling authentic “insider” status. However, the roles of “insider” and “outsider” are never absolute and fieldwork dynamics are always complex and vary based on relationships (Burnim 1985).

Further, as a foreigner performing Javanese repertoire, I am deeply concerned with issues of cultural appropriation. I continuously reassess my performances, following Brianha Joy Gray in asking questions such as, “Are my performances culturally exploitative?” and “Do they diminish or disrespect Javanese culture in some way?” (Gray 2017). Gray defines cultural exploitation as the use of cultural forms for gains, mainly economic gains, that are disproportionate with the gains of the culture bearers. She cites the commercial success of Elvis Presley’s version of “Hound Dog” against the relatively little-known version by Big Mama Thornton as an example of cultural exploitation for economic gain. In terms of disrespect or diminishment, Gray is interested in whether the cultural form is in some way sacred or revered by culture bearers. In culturally disrespectful performances, the value of the cultural form is diminished by the performance.

In response to the first question, I have been fortunate to receive a number of opportunities based on my involvement with *kroncong* yet some of these opportunities, such as international travel, are not necessarily available to my Indonesian counterparts. In this way I am receiving a certain kind of capital, albeit not necessarily economic, through my performance of this music. When possible, I try to extend similar opportunities, such as offering international guest lectures, to my interlocuters, but this does not address the imbalance of the situation as a whole. As to whether my performances diminish or disrespect Javanese culture, I will say that musicians in Java respond positively to my performances, even if they offer critical feedback about my pronunciation or my use of embellishments. *Langgam Jawa* is not a sacred repertoire and, although it does not exclude the possibility of diminishment through performance, it certainly reduces the risk.

1.5 Chapter Outline

When I initially began planning how to write this dissertation, I had planned to write three internal chapters that each focused on a genre, *kroncong*, *campur sari*, or gamelan respectively, in which *langgam Jawa* is performed. I quickly found that there was not a tidy way to cordon off each genre. As I show in Chapters 3 and 4 in particular, singers (and instrumentalists) will often perform multiple genres in the context of a single event. Singers who build their careers singing *langgam Jawa* often cross genres over time as I show in Chapter 5. Instead, I decided to build each

chapter around a topic that cut across genres and illuminated the blurry boundaries among *langgam Jawa* as a repertoire and *kroncong*, *campur sari*, and gamelan as genres.

I open my dissertation by examining an example of *langgam Jawa* that does not fit the standard. Chapter 2 focuses on a 1997 political album called *Waringin Sakti* to look at the role of women, in this case Waldjinhah, *langgam Jawa*. In particular, I offer a lyrical and musical analysis of one song, “*Angka Loro*,” on this album as well as interviews with participating musicians. “*Angka Loro*” does not use the 32-bar song form that my interlocutors describe as the typical form of *langgam Jawa*. I analyze Waldjinhah’s vocal technique in her performance of this song. “*Angka Loro*” combines musical elements from two genres, namely *campursari* and *dangdut*. During Indonesia’s New Order, many types of music and arts were used as part of Golkar’s political campaign. *Langgam Jawa*, as a popular and flexible form, was used by Golkar officials a strategic form to encourage the public to vote for the party. Waldjinhah’s material voice was front and center in this *langgam Jawa* song promoting the Golkar party as she had established herself as a leader in *langgam Jawa*.

Langgam Jawa is performed in a variety of social settings including informal neighborhood gatherings, large concerts, *wayang*, and weddings. Moving from historical work to ethnographic work, in Chapter 3 I focus on describing the thick event of a wedding featuring *campur sari* group Sangga Buana. *Langgam Jawa* repertoire is performed by *pesindhen* as part of the entertainment in weddings which also includes dancing, stage banter, and comedic interactions with the guests. Women are featured prominently as singers of *langgam Jawa* and their voices have been and continue to be central to sonically bridging the genres of *gamelan*, *kroncong*, and *campur sari*. In the first chapter, women are main characters but not the sole focus of the chapter.

In Chapter 4, I turn to focus on the voices of women in *langgam Jawa*. I highlight women's involvement in the performance of *langgam Jawa* and focus on the way that they switch timbre depending on the genre of *langgam Jawa* that they are singing. This chapter is based on interviews with 12 women singers from a range of experience in *kroncong*, *campur sari*, and/or *gamelan*. The vocal timbres that these women produce are part of what makes *langgam Jawa* a repertoire and not a genre. Although *langgam Jawa* was played by *gamelan* and *campur sari* ensembles in the 1960s, the earliest wide circulation of *langgam Jawa* songs was in *kroncong* contexts. Once *langgam Jawa* also became widely circulated in *campur sari* contexts in the 1990s, women's voices, along with the timbres of the instruments, were and continue to be part of what differentiates these genres. *Langgam Jawa* can no longer be regarded as a genre of its own as it crosses several genre cultures.

Although composers in Central Java continue to write new *langgam Jawa* songs and the music continues to be performed, this repertoire is increasingly associated with nostalgia. Chapter 5 focuses on performances by Waldjinah, Nurhana, and Sunyahni to examine distinct ways that the voices of aging female singers of *langgam Jawa* are a potent site for invoking nostalgic meanings among Javanese musicians and listeners. I draw on interviews with these three women along with analysis of their staged performances. Since all three women, perform *kroncong* and *campur sari*, I posit that here the repertoire is more important than the genre. This is also evident in the title of the album mentioned in the chapter: *3 Queens of Universal Langgam*. Instead of *3 Queens of Kroncong* or *3 Queens of Campur Sari*, this album is organized around the association of these three women across the genres in which *langgam Jawa* appears.

As *langgam Jawa* is a repertoire that spans over 70 years of history in Central Java and is played in several social contexts, I do not attempt to cover the history or even the current practice

of this repertoire in its entirety. Instead, each of the four chapters addresses distinct aspects of the musical and social life of this repertoire with an aim for depth over breadth. Each genre in which *langgam Jawa* is played, namely *gamelan*, *campur sari*, and *kroncong*, is constituted from a distinct overall identity of cultural formations. By examining each the social worlds of each of these genres, I aim to better understand the way the past genre culture of *langgam Jawa* shaped and formed each of these genres in its transition to a repertoire. Each chapter cuts or dissects in a different direction: the second chapter investigates *langgam Jawa* in politics, the third chapter provides a detailed ethnography of current *langgam Jawa* performance practices in the context of a wedding, the fourth chapter examines in *langgam Jawa* timbres across genres, and the fifth chapter examines the performances of three singers of *langgam Jawa* through the lens of aging studies.

2.0 WARINGIN SAKTI: POPULAR CULTURE AND POLITICS IN THE NEW ORDER

2.1 Introduction

In 1996, the governor of Central Java funded a cassette called *Waringin Sakti* (Sacred Banyan Tree) to endorse a political party called Golkar in anticipation of the national election the following year. Golkar (*Golongan Karya*, Party of Functional Groups) was the political party associated with the 32-year authoritarian rule of President Suharto, known as the New Order. On this album, traditional *wayang* and *gamelan* master and *dhalang*⁵² Ki Anom Suroto collaborated with nationally renowned singer Waldjinhah. Ki Anom Suroto and lyricist W.S. Nardi reworked the lyrics of preexisting songs to extol the virtues of Golkar and encourage the public to vote for the party. At that time, however, “civil servants [were] ‘urged,’ or subtly coerced, to join Golkar” (Suryakusuma 1996, 95), running counter to the ideals of democracy that the lyrics of the album promote. Some of these lyrics also aimed to connect with the working class, ironic in light of the increasingly ostentatious consumption practiced by Suharto, his family, and his inner circle starting in the mid-1990s. The musicians themselves were in a complicated relationship with Golkar, one that held both restrictions and rewards. In this chapter, I examine the role of Waldjinhah on this album as a leader in the repertoire of *langgam Jawa*. Her voice is heard prominently throughout *Waringin Sakti* and her image is featured on the cover of the album. I analyze the song lyrics and music of a *langgam Jawa* song on the album, “*Angka Loro*” (“Number Two”). Further, I investigate the way that “*Angka Loro*” shows the malleability of *langgam Jawa* as a song form

⁵² A *dhalang* is a narrator and puppeteer of *wayang*.

and reflects the porous nature of genre. Instead of beginning this dissertation with an example of fixity, this chapter focuses on a song that does not fit the standard 32-bar AA'BA' musical form for *langgam Jawa* that my interlocuters describe and combines elements from multiple genres. “*Angka Loro*” uses an AA'B structure with a total length of 44 bars, yet my interlocuters still describe it as a *langgam Jawa* song. Further, this song combines musical elements from the genres of both *campursari* and of *dangdut*. In the final section of this chapter, I will provide information from ethnographic interviews examine the uneasy relationship between musicians and Golkar in the mid-1990s leading up to Reformasi in May 1998.

During the New Order, the autocratic and militaristic regime of Indonesia's second president Suharto, the state aimed to manifest a sense of modernity and “order” and was simultaneously anchored in tradition (Pemberton 1994). During this era, *langgam Jawa* was featured in Suharto's campaign rallies and was performed to entertain the military (Skelchy 2015). *Langgam Jawa* emerged in the late 1950s and peaked in popularity in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In the following sections, I will provide more background information regarding Golkar, the process of recording *Waringin Sakti*, and finally I will turn to a musical analysis of the song “*Angka Loro*.”

2.2 Golkar

Golkar enacted hegemonic power over Indonesians during what was known as the New Order. References for Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony can be found in *Selections from Prison Notebooks* (1971), although he wrote of several different meanings of the term. Gramsci writes that, “The supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as ‘domination’ and as

‘intellectual and moral leadership’” (1971, 57). Here, hegemony can refer to either the ruling classes dominating the general population through politics and ideological coercion, or to working class strategies to gain consent and alliance from the general population. In this dissertation the former definition, the ruling class dominating the general population, is the most relevant.

The New Order regime was known for censorship and the violent suppression of Communism. Suharto seized power in 1966 following the murder of six generals and a lieutenant of the Armed Forces of Indonesia (ABRI) on September 30th, 1965 by supposed Communist party (PKI) followers (Pepinsky 2009, 42). In the confusion, a security guard and the five-year-old daughter of one of the generals were shot (Roosa 2006, 37). At that time, Suharto was acting as the commander of the Army’s Strategic Reserve Command (Kostrad) and launched a brutal and deadly anti-Communist (PKI) offensive (Ibid.). The Ministry of Information under Suharto enacted policies, including censorship, aimed at maintaining singular, hegemonic power. Artists during the New Order regime who chose to speak out still often avoided direct mention of particular individuals and policies in order to evade persecution, arrest, or execution (Sutton 2004, 203). By the mid-1990s, Suharto’s regime was undergoing a process of what Edward Aspinall calls “sultanization,” in which the president, his family, and his inner circle were becoming increasingly indulgent and open to bribery, using funds to start airlines and car companies to further build wealth and power, (Aspinall 2005, 4). The economic crisis of the late 1990s culminated in riots and student demonstrations, eventually forcing Suharto to step down in 1998 and cede his position to vice president Dr. B.J. Habibie (Suryadinata 2007, 336).

The elections held between 1971 and 1997 were anything but free and fair. Prior to the first New Order election in 1971, Suharto worked with the government to revise the elections bill and the political parties bill to ensure governmental control (Suryadinata 2007, 335). Ali Moertopo, an

intelligence aid to Suharto and Minister of Information from 1978 to 1983, was a key in crafting the architecture of the New Order. Moertopo engineered a three-party system, Golkar plus two other parties, in the 1970s and it was solidified into the 1975 Law on Political Parties and Golkar.

In 1972, Moertopo published an unofficial manifesto of the New Order called *Dasar-dasar Pemikiran tentang Akselerasi Modernisasi Pembangunan 25 Tahun* which was published in English in 1973 with the title *The Acceleration and Modernization of 25 Years' Development* (Bourchier & Hadiz 2003, 45). The term “floating mass” was first used by Muslim scholar Nurcholish Madjid in 1971, but was soon adopted by Moertopo and his assistants soon. The aim of this unofficial manifesto was to form a society “without opinions,” a society “in which parties would not have organizations at the village level, and where criticism of the national leadership was not appropriate” (Hanan 2017, 35). Under a formal 1975 law, political parties were officially banned from organizing below the regency level (Anderson 1990, 115). Golkar had been a hegemonic party since 1971 but had lost a little bit of ground in the 1992 election. In 1997, as in years prior, the Development Unity Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan) (PPP) and the Indonesian Democratic Party (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia) (PDI), shared the ballot with Golkar.

Besides this limiting three-party system and laws restricting political organizing, voting rights were also inhibited at this time. Former secretary-general of ASEAN Lieutenant-General Hartono Rekso Dharsono made a defense speech in 1986 opposing what he saw as manipulations of constitutional law carried out by the New Order regime. He said, “everywhere it is an open secret that the people are forced to vote for Golkar through various means, from gentle persuasion to intimidation, frequently incurring sanctions such as beatings, dismissals from civil service positions or other jobs, and, in some areas, killings” (Bourchier & Hadiz 2003, 132). The fear inspired by this intimidation has been confirmed in my interviews and casual conversations in

Indonesia and many of the people I spoke with still prefer to remain anonymous regarding this topic.

In anticipation of the 1997 national election in Indonesia, Central Java Governor Suwardi initiated a project that ultimately brought about the album *Waringin Sakti*. From the start of his tenure, Suwardi had intentions to win back the 10 seats lost for Golkar in the 1992 election,⁵⁴ acting in his provincial role as the Chairman of the Golkar Advisory Board (Ketua Dewan Pertimbangan Golkar)(Kristiawan 1997, 203). Suwardi was known as a big proponent of traditional arts and regularly arranged public performances at the Governor's Office in Semarang. Once a month he arranged a *wayang* as well as regular *kroncong* rehearsals.⁵⁵ Considering this context, the album *Waringin Sakti* was in keeping with his efforts not only to emphasize and promote Javanese arts and music, but also to use culture as a tool to maintain the singular power of Golkar. Further, Suwardi's project fit within the larger context of the New Order elections in focusing on authenticity [I. *asli*] and tradition [I. *tradisi*] and as a means to eclipse concerns of power and social class. Pemberton writes that the displays during political events of this era, specifically the so-called "Festivals of Democracy" during elections, exhibited "explicitly cultural New Order gesturing" (1994, 9), a self-conscious performance of culture as a means of ensuring success and power.

Waringin Sakti is only one example of many demonstrating the way that Golkar attempted to use culture as a tool to reach the masses. In the 1980s, *dangdut* broadcasting was limited on state-run TVRI, yet Golkar promoted it as a "music for everyone" (Weintraub 2010, 171) and it was used heavily during political campaigns (152). Weintraub (2010) shows the links between

⁵⁴ Seats for DPRD (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah) Tingkat I (Direct House of Representatives Level I).

⁵⁵ Waldjinah, personal communication with the author, June 25th, 2022.

media, politics, and culture and the way the popularity of *dangdut* was used by government officials to sway the masses and also to increase their salaries using connections through state-controlled mass media. Another example is the “*Wayang Kolosal*” or “*Wayang Spektakuler*” performances of the 1990s. These were sensationalized *wayang* performances that often featured two screens and multiple *dhalang*, the largest of which were consistently sponsored by Golkar (Mrázek 2000, 118). According to Sumar Bagyo who frequently appeared as the character Gareng in the comedic sections of state-sponsored *wayang* in Semarang, the *lakon* often included promotional messages about Golkar, describing the power of the party and portraying a positive image.⁵⁶ Kathryn Emerson writes that, in these sensationalized performances, “The *dhalang* would be expected to pass on messages from the government about birth control, farming techniques, new programmes, impending dangers— such as if there had been an outbreak of counterfeiting— or other matters deemed important” (2022, 99).

Although Golkar held hegemonic power during Suharto’s rule, I follow Raymond Williams in conceiving of hegemony as something that always has cracks and contradictions. Williams writes that, “...hegemony can never be singular. Its internal structures are highly complex” (1977, 112). Hegemony, in this case the hegemonic power of Golkar, “does not just passively exist as a form of dominance. It has continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified” (Ibid.). Because of this need for constant renewal, officials working to promote Golkar created projects like *Waringin Sakti* and policies that discouraged political organizing on the village level to defend the party’s position. Williams coined the concept “structures of feeling” to explain the way that new ways of thinking and resistance emerge even under what seems to be a total power (Williams 1977, 128). This resistance was evident in some of the reactions of my interlocuters

⁵⁶ Sumar Bagyo, personal communication, July 20th, 2023.

when discussing this album and listening back to the music. The following section examines the process of recording *Waringin Sakti* and focuses on the song “*Angka Loro*.”

2.3 *Waringin Sakti*

Governor Suwardi assigned Sudjadi, a career politician beneath the governor,⁵⁷ to lead a committee to initiate work on this album. Sudjadi was close friends with Waldjinah and Ki Anom Suroto and chose to feature them in this project.⁵⁸ The album is named after the banyan tree, ubiquitous and often revered as a sacred tree in Java, that also appears in the logo for Golkar. My interlocutors tell me that this tree was chosen as a symbol of protection, in the way that its branches spread out and provide refuge, to the people of Indonesia. All nine of the songs use the regional Javanese language, as opposed to the lingua franca Bahasa Indonesia, for the song lyrics. All of the pieces were adaptations of pre-existing works, switching the original lyrics for ones that supported the Golkar political campaign.

A group of musicians called Bintang Surakarta started their collaboration for *Waringin Sakti* at Studio Pustaka in Semarang, Java in 1996. Bintang Surakarta is the name of a group that has existed for decades and has constantly changing membership. Figure 1 shows an iteration of the group from 1968. By the time *Waringin Sakti* was recorded in 1996, Waldjinah was the only remaining member. This album contains five songs using a *gamelan* ensemble, all led by renowned musician and shadow puppeteer Ki Anom Suroto. The other four songs on the album all feature a

⁵⁷ Sudjadi was the Chairman of BP7 (*Badan Pembinaan Pendidikan Pelaksanaan Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengalaman Pancasila*, an organization focused on educating the public about Pancasila) at this time.

⁵⁸ Bambang Hery, personal communication with the author, November 27th, 2022.

kroncong ensemble, namely “*Angka Loro*,” the title track “*Waringin Sakti*,” “*Eling Eling*,” and “*Pepeling*,” and the latter two of those songs are collaborations with the *gamelan* ensemble. All four of these songs were led by Waldjinhah’s eldest son, Bambang Hery.



Figure 2: A photo of an earlier arrangement of the kroncong group Bintang Surakarta in 1968. Waldjinhah is in the center smiling and wearing a black top. Courtesy of Bambang Hery and used with permission.

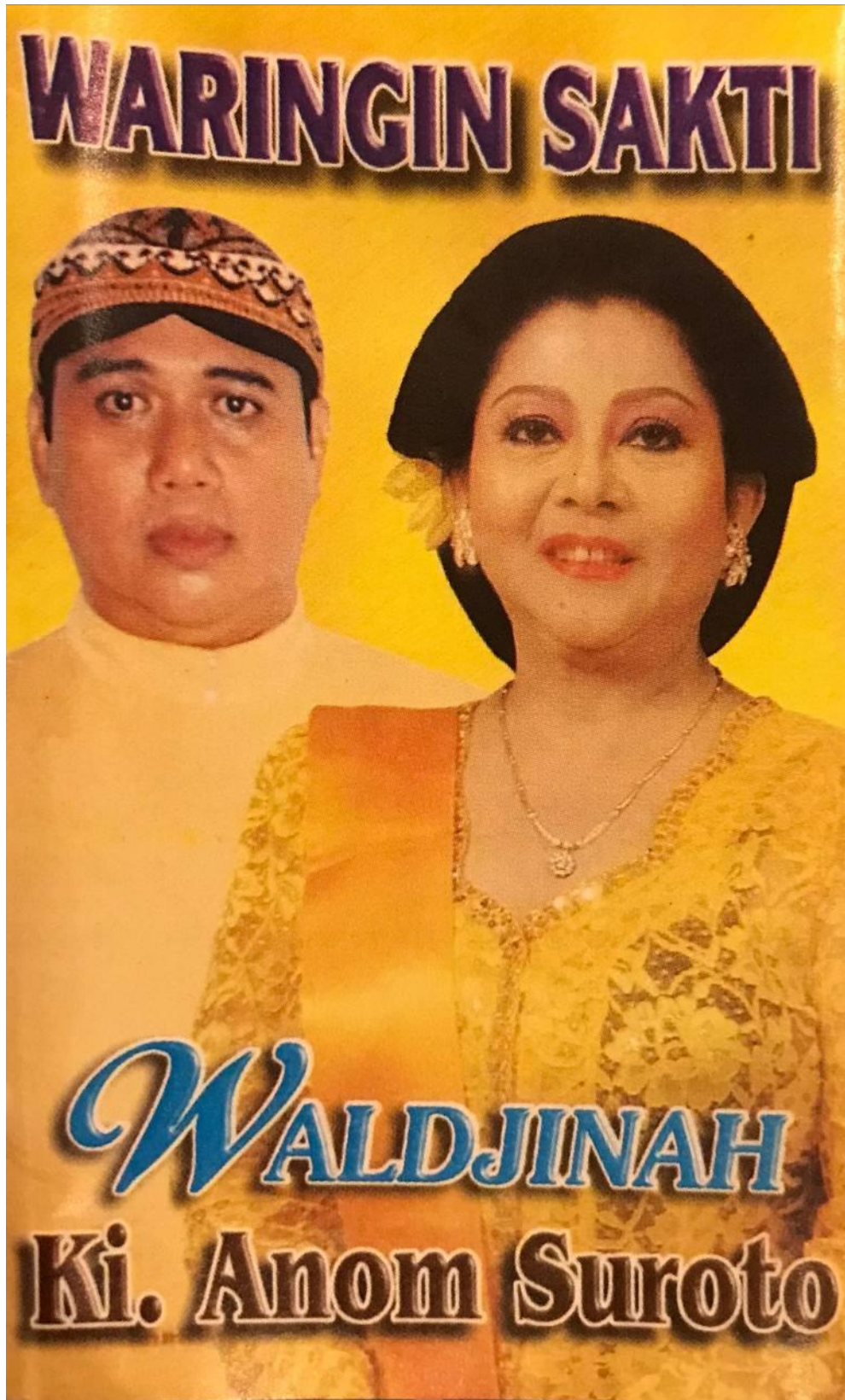


Figure 3: Album cover for Waringin Sakti, courtesy of Bambang Hery and used with permission.

Figure 2 shows the cover of *Waringin Sakti* with Waldjinhah and Ki Anom Suroto featured prominently wearing traditional clothing. Waldjinhah wears a yellow *kebaya* with a yellow sash while Ki Anom Suroto wears a white jacket and a *blangkon*. Yellow, the dominant hue on the album cover, is the color associated with the Golkar party. The names of both of the artists are featured prominently and the font size is slightly larger than the title of the album, showing the way that the coordinators of this album wanted to emphasize the inclusion of these two famous artists. The coordinators aimed to create associations with the appeal of these artists and an appeal for Golkar itself. The image of a man and a woman side-by-side, although there was no actual romantic involvement, recalls the “family principle” wherein “society was likened to a harmonious family” (Aspinall 2005, 148). Waldjinhah and Ki Anom Suroto pose in this image as representatives of the ideal mother and father, respectively. This aligns with what Julia Suryakusuma calls “*Bapak Ibuism*” (father-motherism), wherein within the model of the state as family, the father is the primary source of authority and power while the mother is a medium of that power (1996, 102).

For the most part the songs were selected by Pak Sudjadi but Waldjinhah did select a song called “*Anoman Obong*” by Ranto Edi Gudel which became the basis for the song “*Waringin Sakti*” on the album. Once the songs were recorded, everything about recordings needed to be approved by Pak Sudjadi and the album committee and, in fact, three other songs were dropped from the album.⁵⁹ Notably, the songs that were dropped were in Indonesian language, perhaps a negative factor from the perspective of the album committee’s aims to appeal to the public of Central Java. The album was released the following year and 3000 copies were made. These albums were given mostly to local political offices to play during meetings and campaign rallies.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Bambang Hery, personal communication with the author, November 27th, 2022.

⁶⁰ Jefri Chaniago, personal communication with the author, December 22nd, 2022.

The musicians had no knowledge of the cassette being distributed outside of Java. They were not sold and may have received radio play, but only in the event that a campaign rally was being aired on the radio.

Waldjinhah's first large public performance was for the *Ratu Kembang Kacang* (Queen of the Bean Flower) competition in 1958, a regional competition in Surakarta (Skelchy 2015, 151). All of the contestants sang the same song, "*Kembang Kacang*," which, although it did not use the standard 32-bar AA'BA' form, was accompanied by *kroncong* instruments playing in a stratified texture that imitated *gamelan* instruments in a *pelog* tuning. That same year she went on to win the Bintang Radio (Radio Star), a national competition. This was the start of her being known for a regional repertoire, *langgam Jawa*, at the national level, Waldjinhah was featured in political campaigns, asked to entertain at military bases, and featured on this album because of the notoriety that she had achieved through her career which was grounded in singing *langgam Jawa*.

Waldjinhah and Ki Anom Suroto both had longstanding involvements with Golkar.. Waldjinhah's first performance for a Golkar campaign was in 1971 and she performed at rallies, presidential events, or other state-sponsored events nearly every year during Suharto's rule (Skelchy 2015, 303). In an interview with ethnomusicologist Russ Skelchy she said, "That year I performed at quite a few Golkar rallies...I can't remember the exact number but there were many. I was the main attraction (*daya tarik*) and my role was more as a campaign worker (*juru kampanye*) than as a party member" (Ibid.). Both Waldjinhah and Ki Anom Suroto achieved recognition before their involvement with the political party and were invited for performances as a way to draw the attention of the public. In the same interview, Waldjinhah said, "At most rallies, I warmed up the crowd, performing before the main speakers took the stage" (Ibid.). Besides these performance

opportunities, she also received a car as reward for her first performance with Golkar and she later received expensive musical instruments (Skelchy 2015, 305).

Waldjinhah maintains that she was a paid performer at Golkar rallies and preferred not to state an official affiliation with any party (Skelchy 2015, 302). She never wore the yellow blazer associated with Golkar but she did, as evidenced on this album cover, occasionally wear yellow *kebaya*, a traditional Javanese blouse. Waldjinhah never spoke at rallies; instead, her task was to warm up the crowd and draw attendees, many of whom were already familiar with her music or were dedicated fans (Ibid.). Her presence was symbolic, using her material voice as opposed to her metaphorical voice.

When listeners describe Waldjinhah's material voice they often describe it as flirtatious or coquettish [I. *kemayu* or J. *kenès*]. In interviews with Russ Skelchy, she used the term *kemayu* to describe her own voice: "When it's good it sounds coquettish and makes people smile" (Skelchy 2015, 91). The term *kemayu* is a word that is used to describe women or things that are considered feminine and there is not a perfect synonym for men or things that are considered masculine. One of the musical embellishments that she uses to achieve coquettish vocals is a quick, upward glissando on the end of certain words. This was a technique that Waldjinhah used sparingly but with great effect. Endah Laras, a multi-genre singer based in Surakarta, said, "From what I know, in the old style [this embellishment] was precisely placed. But people nowadays, every [syllable] is given [this embellishment]."⁶¹ This characteristic of Waldjinhah's voice was a part of her contribution to *Waringin Sakti* and I will return to this topic later in the chapter.

⁶¹ Endah Laras, personal communication, July 14th, 2023. [I. *Setahuku gaya yang dulu masih pas di tempatnya. Kalau sekarang, orang-orang sekarang, semuanya di kasih itu.*] This was part of a conversation about musical embellishments that sounds *kemayu*. In everyday Indonesian language speakers often omit the subject so I have added it in brackets in an effort to make the translation more clear.

During the late New Order, Ki Anom Suroto was frequently called for Golkar-related performances and was particularly close with a Golkar member named Harmoko⁶² who served as the Minister of Information from 1987 to 1997. During the New Order, musicians who were favored by Golkar were often compensated in the form of opportunities; if a musician was hoping to make a significant purchase of some kind, they might not be paid directly by Golkar but instead be paid in opportunities, perhaps a string of performances that would add up to significant earnings.⁶³ Ki Anom Suroto was able to set up a full recording studio and rehearsal space with this kind of assistance from the political party.⁶⁴

Waringin Sakti was certainly not the only album recorded during the New Order to promote Golkar. For example, an album called *Souvenir Pemilu '71* (GLP-50001) was released in 1971 in anticipation of the election that year. This album featured well-known singers such as Bing Slamet and Ellya Khadam. Another example is part of a series called *Karya Siaga Gatra Praja* with Golkar-themed songs arranged by Budiman BJ and played by Orkes Kroncong Bintang Jakarta (year unknown). The cover for this album is shown in Figure 3. Political parties in Indonesia continue to commission works from musicians and composers. Gerindra, the political party for incoming president Prabowo Subianto,⁶⁵ recently commissioned a song called “*Api Perjuangan Prabowo*” (“The Fire of Prabowo’s Struggle (For Victory)”) which was performed by a *kroncong* group called The Garudas and released in June 2023.⁶⁶ This places *Waringin Sakti* in a long line

⁶² Bambang Siswanto, personal communication with the author, December 22nd, 2022.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Bambang Hery, personal communication with the author, November 27th, 2022; Bambang Siswanto, personal communication with the author, December 22nd, 2022.

⁶⁵ Prabowo Subianto has also been affiliated with Golkar in the past.

⁶⁶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFcH_SgLRhE.

of political parties in Indonesia using music as a tool for promotion that extends beyond the years of the New Order.



Figure 4: The cover for “Seri Keroncong” (“Kroncong Series”) of *Karya Siaga Gatra Praja* found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbEg6luG4G4>.

2.4 “Angka Loro”

In this section I will focus on the song “*Angka Loro*” or “Number Two.” “Number Two” refers to Golkar’s number on the ballots during this election. At this time Indonesians elected a legislature as opposed to a head of state; 2004 was the first time that people in Indonesia elected a president. The lyrics to “*Angka Loro*” were changed from a piece called “*Ela Elo*” which begins as a *langgam Jawa* piece and then switches to a *dangdut* rhythmic treatment in the middle. “*Ela*

Elo” is a phrase that refers to a person who is inconsistent or whose words do not match their actions.

The 1990s were a time of transition for the repertoire of *langgam Jawa*. This is the time period wherein *langgam Jawa* transitioned from a genre to a repertoire, largely due to the increasing popularity of the genre *campur sari* which frequently employs *langgam Jawa* songs. Instead of *langgam Jawa* functioning as a distinct genre, it transformed into a set of songs that was shared among several genres including *kroncong*, *campur sari*, and *gamelan*. Throughout this dissertation, I challenge the notion of genre, repertoire, or the song form of *langgam Jawa* itself as fixed by describing processes of transformation surrounding all three.

“*Ela Elo*” is a prime example of the flexibility of the *langgam Jawa* form and the expansiveness of the way that musicians in Central Java use this term. The form does not follow the 32-bar AA’BA’ form like many *langgam Jawa* pieces. My interlocuters, however, describe the piece as a “special” *langgam Jawa* [I. *langgam Jawa istimewa*]⁶⁷ because of the style and the *cengkok* that the song uses in the A and A’ sections. The form is AA’B with a total length of 44 bars. The A sections are what I will later refer to as the verse and the B section is what I will later refer to as the refrain. This cycle repeats three times in most original recordings of “*Ela Elo*.” The first 28 bars of A and A’ employ the *pelog* scale as well as textures similar to those used by *kroncong* or *campursari* ensembles when playing standard *langgam Jawa* pieces. When the texture changes during the 16 bars of the B section to what my interlocuters describe as a *dangdut* feel, the instruments begin playing equal-tempered, diatonic scales and chords. A partial transcription of “*Angka Loro*” can be found in the Appendix.

⁶⁷ Yanti Mboel, personal communication, June 25th, 2023; Danis Sugiyanto, October 23rd, 2022.

The lyrics were written by W.S. Nardi, a composer from Central Java.⁶⁸ Bambang Hery arranged this piece specifically for Bintang Surakarta. Below are the Javanese language lyrics translated into English with assistance from my language teacher, Suwanto.

Table 1-Translation of “Angka Loro”

<p>1 <i>Angka loro</i> Number two</p> <p>2 <i>Sliramu ngendika sawise merdika</i> You say after independence</p> <p>3 <i>Setya tuhu marang Pancasila</i> Faithful and loyal toward Pancasila</p> <p>4 <i>Malah njur prasetya</i> Even then promised</p> <p>5 <i>Nguri-uri, tut wuri</i> Preserve, follow supportively from behind (to back someone up)</p> <p>6 <i>Golongan Karya</i> Golkar (Party of Functional Groups)</p>
<p>7 <i>Angka loro</i> Number two</p> <p>8 <i>Yen wise nduwe jago</i> If you already have a champion</p> <p>9 <i>Ra sah menga-mengo</i> There’s no need to keep looking around</p> <p>10 <i>Ya wis tetap tetep tetep kuwi</i> If it’s already spot on, stick with that</p> <p>11 <i>Dibelani, nganti mati, nomer loro aja lali</i> Defended, until death, don’t forget number two</p>
<p>12 <i>Montor apik jare Timor</i> Nice car, they say it’s a Timor</p> <p>13 <i>Gedhe cilik rukun amor</i> Old and young can mingle in peace</p> <p>14 <i>Golkarku pelopor</i> My Golkar is a pioneer</p> <p>15 <i>Ayu bagus pada wae</i> Pretty or handsome, it’s all the same</p> <p>16 <i>Yen wus cukup usiane</i> If you’re old enough</p>

⁶⁸ Jefri Chaniago, personal communication with the author, December 22nd, 2022.

Table 1 continued - Translation of “Angka Loro”

<p>17 <i>Milih Golkar wae</i> Just vote for Golkar</p> <p>18 <i>Buruh kuli swasta jare</i> Laborers, workers, white collar professionals, that’s the word</p> <p>19 <i>Tukang mbatik padha wae</i> Batik makers, it’s all the same</p> <p>20 <i>Nyoblos Golkar sae</i> Just pick Golkar</p> <p>21 <i>Tukang pijet adol dawet</i> Massage therapists and <i>dawet</i>⁶⁹ sellers</p> <p>22 <i>Sopir becak sopir taxi</i> Becak drivers and taxi drivers</p> <p>23 <i>Golkar jaya pasti</i></p>
<p>24 <i>Angka loro</i> Number two</p> <p>25 <i>Gelaring sanyata</i> Open up truly</p> <p>26 <i>Kabeh kang sutresna</i> All who are loved</p> <p>27 <i>Mesem-mesem tanda tanda lega</i> Smiling is a sign of satisfaction</p> <p>28 <i>Tanpa samudana sing dicoblos, tan liya</i> Without concealing inner feelings those who pierce, there is no other</p> <p>29 <i>Golongan karya</i></p>

The song consists of two verses (lines 1-11) marked A and B in the Appendix, a refrain (lines 12-23) marked C in the Appendix, and another verse (lines 24-29) marked D. The song opens with a unison melody among the flute, violin, and a synthesizer supported by the rhythm section of *cuk*, *cak*, and *selo*. After a break in the music and a single cymbal hit, Waldjinah enters singing “number two,” referring to the ballot number of Golkar. The lyrics then refer to loyalty

⁶⁹ *Dawet* is a dessert that contains droplets of green, pandan-flavored rice flour jelly, coconut milk and syrup from palm sugar.

towards Pancasila, the state ideology developed by Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, in 1945. Pancasila consists of Five Principles, namely, Belief in One Almighty God, Indonesian Unity, Internationalism, Democracy through Deliberation, and Social Justice for All People (Suryadinata 2018, 1). Suharto's New Order regime sought to refashion Pancasila ideology, stressing a blind loyalty from society towards the state, according to what was called the "family principle," pressing people to place the interests of the state before their own (Aspinall 2005, 23). At this time in particular, the New Order was invested in directing the attention of the people towards national development (Bourchier & Hadiz 2003, 47). By referring to Pancasila, the lyrics nod to the refashioned state ideology of the New Order, one that sets the state first before all else. Besides encouraging listeners to vote for Golkar, the lyrics in this first section dictate the *way* that listeners might support the party: by avoiding any forms of division and by "backing up" Golkar (*tut wuri*).

In between verses a male chorus sings "*angka loro*" three times before another break in the music. The second verse, lines seven through eleven, advise listeners not to look for other candidates because they already have a "champion." However, many Indonesians at this time did not have a choice to look for another candidate. Many voters were pressured to vote for Golkar through intimidation, which I found reflected in the fact that, twenty-six years after the release of the album and twenty-five years after Suharto stepped down, several people I spoke with still wanted to remain anonymous.

In the 9th line, Waldjinhah sings the words "*Ra sah*" with the coquettish vocal that she is known for by her listeners. "*Ra sah*" is a shortened version of "*ora usah*" which translates to "no need" and is part of this line: "If you already have a champion/There's no need to keep looking around." Waldjinhah uses the quick, upward glissando on the syllable "*sah*" that my interlocutors describe as *kemayu* which can be seen in measure 28 and again in measure 86 of the score in the

Appendix. Waldjinah tosses the pitch upwards for the glissando, as if to create an aural equivalent of a hand waving away any concerns. In this case, listeners are invited not to worry about looking for another political party as they already have “a champion.” Waldjinah skillfully applies this *kemayu* embellishment just twice throughout the whole song, and therefore creating a greater impact when the technique is used. Her coquettish and decidedly feminine vocal embellishment playfully invites listeners to set their cares aside.

The 12th line marks the beginning of the refrain and the texture of the song changes to a popular dance feel that draws on *dangdut* rhythms. In this section there is a call and response between Waldjinah and the male chorus. The chorus sings lines 13, 17, 20, and 23 while Waldjinah sings the remaining lines. In the first line of the refrain, the lyrics mention a brand of car called Timor. This national car project was launched by Tommy Suharto, President Suharto’s son, in 1996 as a joint venture with Kia Motors of South Korea and officially known as Kia Timor Motors (Hale 2001, 632). The Suharto government granted a special one-year exemption on tariffs and taxes for Kia Timor Motors, provoking widespread criticism of nepotism from the public (Ibid.). This project only ran for one year so it is remarkable that a reference made it into this song just in time. It remains a question as to whether the lyricist was asked by the committee to specifically include this reference or if it was simply a convenient rhyme. Either way, this nod to the Timor car project brings the context of late-1990s “sultanization” into the song lyrics as this project aimed to further enrich the Suharto family.

The lyrics then call on people of all ages and people who are “pretty or handsome” (“*ayu bagus*”) as long as they are the legal voting age of 17. In lines 18 through 22, the lyricist hails a

series of laborers in what I read as an attempt to connect with the *rakyat*,⁷⁰ the everyday working people in Indonesia. The first two words, “*buruh*” and “*kuli*,” are general words for laborers although “*kuli*” has a connotation similar to “coolie”: someone who specifically does arduous, manual labor. The next word, “*swasta*,” indicates private sector workers, typically in positions that might be referred to as “white collar.” Line 19 refers to “*tukang batik*”: makers of batik, a celebrated traditional textile from Indonesia. The word “*tukang*” appears again in line 21, translating roughly to craftsman but in this instance, addressing workers who might be referred to as massage therapists [I. *tukang pijet*]. Massages, however, are not considered a luxury in the way that they are in the United States and both those who give and receive massages belong to a wider range of socioeconomic strata than one might expect to find in the U.S.. “*Sopir*” is the word for driver, and line 22 hails people who drive *becak* (tricycle rickshaws) and taxis.

With the exception of private sector workers, all of the occupations mentioned in lines 18 to 22 could be considered “*menengah ke bawah*”: middle to lower class jobs. This is precisely the same group referred to in the semi-official doctrine of the “floating mass” during the New Order, a group of people who were expected to put the needs of society before their own and leave the politics to the politicians. This group was expected not have opinions, which may account for the blunt nature of the lyrics; the lyrics aimed to inform them exactly what to do. Two other songs on the album, “*Pepeling*” and “*Eling Eling*,” even mention the precise date of the election: May 29th 1997. In casual conversation, listeners in Central Java have told me that they are surprised by the lyrics in part because the lyrics for both *kroncong* and *gamelan* are often deeply poetic and

⁷⁰ Andrew Weintraub (2010, 82) traces the way that the *rakyat* are alternately disparaged by magazine and newspaper articles as idle and ignorant and held up as “innocent, morally superior, economically unprivileged but politically sovereign figures who often suffer from injustice inflicted by the rich and powerful” (Heryanto 1999, 163). The *rakyat* are framed differently depending on the context. I conceive of the *rakyat* as everyday people in Indonesia who are often oppressed by the upper classes.

nuanced. They commented that the combination of political messages with these Javanese musical forms was not always a good fit. I also find that the mention of Timor, a sign of sultanization, in the same section as the addresses to workers to be incongruous, putting the increasing wealth of the Suharto family in stark contrast with the struggles of the working class. The needs of the first family were prioritized over those of the people and even the state in this instance.

In the midst of the calls to everyday, working people, listeners are pushed to “just pick Golkar” or more specifically to “*nyoblos*” (“punch out” or “pierce”) Golkar, referring to Indonesia’s use of punch ballots. Listeners were directed to vote but, as was most clear in the case of civil servants, there is only one acceptable choice. “In contrast to Sukarno’s efforts to mobilize the masses, the emphasis here [in the New Order] is on winding back popular participation in politics for the sake of political stability and development” (Bourchier & Hadiz 2003, 29). Certainly any political campaign will direct voters to choose the concerned party, but the words “just pick Golkar” take on a different tone in a context where the public was so strongly discouraged from involvement in politics and where intimidation was so rampant.

In the last line of the refrain, the lyrics read “*Golkar jaya pasti*” or “Golkar will definitely be victorious.” It was, in fact, definite that Golkar would win this election just as they had in 1971, 1982, 1987, 1992, and in 1997, the year that this album was released, through a combination of censorship, the three-party system, and intimidation of voters ensured Golkar’s victory. Leo Suryadinata writes that this was the most violent election of the Suharto era and involved even more repressive measures than in years prior (2007, 336). Pushback from these repressive measures in combination with other factors such as the economic crisis ultimately led to the breakdown of the New Order regime, ushering in an era known as Reformasi.

Waldjinah opens the third verse (lines 24-29) by singing “*angka loro*” (“number two”). Line 25 reads “*gelaring sanyata*” which translates to “open up truly.” The meaning here is somewhat unclear. I interpret this line as a command for the voter to open up to “truly” to Golkar and to submit to the demands of the political party. Line 27 translates to “smiling is a sign of satisfaction” or “smiling is a sign of relief,” suggesting that voters might have an easy smile after voting for Golkar. The following line translates to “without concealing inner feelings those who pierce, there is no other.” The word “*samudana*” in that line means refers to a pleasant external expression. In some instances “*samudana*” indicates that this outward expression conceals contrary internal feelings. In this instance, those contrary internal feelings might be a sense of unease with the political climate under Suharto. Lines 27 and 28 combine to suggest that voters will have a genuine smile, not a forced smile, after choosing Golkar, running contrary to practices of force and intimidation surrounding voting in Indonesia at this time. Line 28 ends with “there is no other.” As opposed to a campaign claiming that a certain party is the best choice, this line indicates that Golkar is the one and only choice.

After this, the first two verses and the refrain (lines 1-23) are repeated a second time and the last lyrics are the male chorus repeating line 23 “*Golkar jaya pasti*” (“Golkar will definitely be victorious”). It seems fitting that these would be the final words of the song as Golkar itself had the final word on the elections at that time. After an abridged repetition of the cheery melody from the beginning, the song concludes with a another single cymbal hit.

2.5 Interview Material

I was able to interview four musicians who played on *Waringin Sakti*, namely, featured singer Waldjinah; her son Bambang Hery who created musical arrangements and played flute; Jefri Chaniago who played bass, a ukulele-like instrument called *cak*, and sang backing vocals; and Wahyu Tejo Santosa who played another ukulele-like instrument known as *cuk* and also did backing vocals. Waldjinah celebrated her 77th birthday during my fieldwork in 2022-2023 and remains in good health at the time of my writing this chapter. Because of her age and her fame, however, she consistently has one of her sons accompanying her, in this case Bambang Hery who is in his early 60s and whom I consider to be a good friend of mine. In my interviews with her in the past as well as for this piece, one of her sons is also present and also participating in the interview. I initially heard a mention of this album in Russ Skelchy's



Figure 5: Wahyu Tejo Santosa (left) and Bambang Hery (right) in Bambang Hery's home studio. A photo of his mother, Waldjinah, in the same studio is hanging on the wall in front of them. Photo by the author.

dissertation (2015)⁷¹ and Bambang Hery was kind enough to digitize it for me. He also connected me with Jefri Chaniago and Wahyu Tejo Santosa.⁷²

There is only one more living member of Bintang Surakarta, percussion player Muryadi, who I was not able to interview. Two other informants were my gamelan teacher Bambang Siswanto who has performed frequently with Ki Anom Suroto and Waldjinh and Edy Winoto, a cello player who later joined Bintang Surakarta. Neither of these musicians were directly involved with the production of this album. All of the aforementioned musicians are based in or around Surakarta in Central Java which was the main site of my fieldwork. I also interviewed six non-musicians who preferred to remain anonymous, two women and four men, ranging in ages between their mid-30s and late 70s.

All of the musicians involved in this project that I was able to interview claimed political neutrality. In general, Waldjinh avoids official statements about her political affiliation but when I asked Waldjinh about her relationship with Golkar at this time, she used the word “*ikut*” which can mean “to follow” or “to go along with/ to accompany,”⁷³ suggesting a level of ambiguity as to whether she, in fact, followed the party fervently or simply followed orders to perform. Yet in interviews with Russ Skelchy she described feeling “threatened” [I. *terancam*] particularly because members of her family were civil servants (2015, 305).⁷⁴ Jefri Chaniago said, “As musicians we’re neutral... wherever we’re invited, we’re ready [to play]. We’re not too fanatic.” (“*Kami sebagai*

⁷¹ For more interviews and information about Waldjinh, see Skelchy forthcoming.

⁷² During our interview, I realized that I had met Jefri Chaniago briefly at a performance I had done 5 years ago in a neighboring city. Jefri Chaniago and Wahyu Tejo Santosa are both in their 50s and are still practicing musicians. I realized that I had met Wahyu Tejo Santosa during his performance with a group called Sangga Buana. I knew from my prior meeting with him that he had a background in kroncong, but I had no idea that he used to play with Bintang Surakarta. When I saw his performance with Sangga Buana, he was wearing face paint and traditional Javanese clothing, doubling as an MC and a dancer for a wedding.

⁷³ Waldjinh, personal communication with the author, June 25th, 2022.

⁷⁴ Skelchy writes that, “Waldjinh never specifically mentioned a case where any such ‘threats’ were explicitly made toward her but only that the possibility existed” (2015, 305).

seniman, netral. Mana yang ngajak, siap. Gak terlalu fanatik.”).⁷⁵ Bambang Hery worked at Bank Jateng, the government bank of Central Java, at the time and said, “*Karena saya adalah pegawai pemerintah, otomatis saya Golkar*” (“Because I was a government employee, I automatically went to Golkar”), referring to the way that state workers were pressured into voting for Golkar.⁷⁶ A conversation with a musician who later played with Bintang Surakarta, Edy Winoto, also confirmed this lack of options for civil servants. During the New Order regime, Edy Winoto’s father was a police officer and therefore had to vote for Golkar: “Because back at that time all government employees have to [choose] number two.” (“*Karena dulu waktu itu tahun itu pegawai negeri semua itu harus nomer dua*”).⁷⁷ Certainly a musician who was also a government worker like Bambang Hery would not have had a choice but to play when requested by the party.

Wahyu Tejo Santosa remembers hearing this album played at the Town Hall [I. *Balai Kota*] in Surakarta. He said the album would be played while people were waiting for officials to arrive for meetings and he felt that having music encouraged people to come to such events.⁷⁸ Another anonymous interlocuter said they remembered hearing “Angka Loro” played during campaign rallies in Wonosari, a village in Central Java where they were living in the 1990s. Golkar was had a strong presence in Wonosari and besides the frequent campaign rallies, music from this album could be heard playing loudly from the local Golkar office in the village.

I asked Wahyu Tejo Santosa if the musicians were compensated well for recording *Waringin Sakti*. He said, “what’s important to me is that I am a performer who got the opportunity to [musically] accompany a legend. Really I can’t be paid with any price but instead with

⁷⁵ Jefri Chaniago, personal communication with the author, December 22nd, 2022.

⁷⁶ Bambang Hery, personal communication with the author, November 27th, 2022.

⁷⁷ Edy Winoto, personal communication with the author, November 28th, 2022.

⁷⁸ Wahyu Tejo Santosa, personal communication with the author, December 22nd, 2022.

satisfaction, the satisfaction of a musician who gets to accompany someone who is already a legend.”⁷⁹ Bambang Hery was also still paid for the three songs that he arranged for the album that were ultimately dropped.⁸⁰

I asked the musicians who they thought the target audience was for this album. Waldjinhah said that the governor wanted to reach the general public in Central Java which is why she thought that the album committee chose the use of Javanese language and the use of Javanese musical forms like gamelan and langgam Jawa.⁸¹ The governor wanted to “*nguri uri tradisi*” or to “preserve tradition” by using these musical forms and thought these would be the best styles of music to connect with the public.⁸² Bambang Hery and Wahyu Tejo Santosa both agreed that the intended audience included all residents of Central Java, regardless of age, gender, or socioeconomic strata.⁸³ Jefri Chaniago, however, felt that the album and the lyrics were aimed more towards the middle to lower classes as opposed to upper classes, particularly in the use of gamelan music in other tracks on the album.⁸⁴ He suggested that gamelan would have particularly appealed to older, underclass Javanese citizens.⁸⁵

One of the most striking reactions that I witnessed during interviews was laughter. During my fieldwork in 2022-23, I played “Angka Loro” for a group of three people ranging in age from their early 40s to late 70s. During lines 18-20, all three of them burst into laughter. These lines translate to, “Laborers, workers, white collar professionals, that’s the word/ Batik makers, it’s all

⁷⁹ Wahyu Tejo Santosa, personal communication with the author, January 3rd, 2023. ““Sama sama Mbak Hannah! “Yang penting saya adanya seniman terkhusus bisa mengiringi legend itu betul betul tidak bisa dibayar dengan harga berapa pun tapi kepuasan. Kepuasan musisi bisa mengiringi seseorang yang sudah legend.”

⁸⁰ Bambang Hery, personal communication with the author, November 27th, 2022.

⁸¹ Waldjinhah, personal communication with the author, June 25th, 2022.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Wahyu Tejo Santosa, personal communication with the author, December 22nd, 2022; Bambang Hery, personal communication with the author, November 27th, 2022.

⁸⁴ Jefri Chaniago, personal communication with the author, December 22nd, 2022.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

the same/ Just pick Golkar.” When I asked why they laughed so heartily at this section, one of them responded that it struck him as satirical because most of the workers mentioned in these lyrics were lower class and associated with the PDI political party. This person explained to me that the *rakyat* often voted for PDI, recognizing that Golkar did not have their best interests in mind. The lyrics in “*Angka Loro*” were not written with a tongue-in-cheek, conspiratorial tone towards the *rakyat*. Instead, the lyrics earnestly performed the “explicitly cultural New Order gesturing” (1994, 9) that Pemberton described, sincerely calling the *rakyat* to support the party to ensure its continued success and power.

In this case, laughter is a form of resistance. All three of my interlocutors remembered life under Suharto and remembered the oppression and censorship of this era. Laughter is a way, decades later, to resist this oppressive power and points to the fact that there were cracks in Golkar’s power even while it was still in place. It could be the case that while Suharto was still in power they did not feel that they could laugh out loud, but that they could already *feel* the incongruity between the ruling party and the *rakyat*. The party’s efforts to co-opt music to appeal to the masses obviously failed to convince these three listeners.

2.6 Conclusion

“*Angka Loro*” is an interesting case study demonstrating not only what a wide range of repertoire can still be considered *langgam Jawa*, but also in the way that this repertoire can be used. In the first chapter I examine the way that *langgam Jawa* is used during weddings in Central Java and in the second chapter I describe the way that women singers use different treatments and ensemble arrangements of the same songs to toggle between distinct vocalities and identities. In

this chapter I study the way that a *langgam Jawa* song, “*Ela Elo*,” is reworked into “*Angka Loro*” and co-opted by Golkar in an attempt to sway the masses to vote for Golkar. When musicians refer to “*Ela Elo*” and “*Angka Loro*” as *langgam Jawa* repertoire, they are not referring to the form but instead the style of the songs, the use of Javanese language, and the use of an approximation of the pelog tuning system. In this way, Golkar used the style known as *langgam Jawa* in an attempt to draw support and appeal to the *rakyat*.

At first blush the use of these styles of music articulate well with aims to preserve traditional Javanese music, target an ethnically and linguistically Central Javanese audience, and promote Pancasila. Upon closer examination, however, aspects of the lyrics such as the calls to the working class are incongruous with the process of sultanization that had reached its peak in the Suharto family by the time this album was released. Meanwhile many working class people were struggling through the economic crisis. While the lyrics to the “*Angka Loro*” encouraged the people in Central Java to vote, their options were highly limited due to processes of intimidation, processes that were surely stronger than any powers of persuasion that this album might have held. Golkar officials knew that “*Ela Elo*” was a popular song and chose to use the melody to draw audiences. Despite the popularity of the melody, the lyrics and context and this reworked song no longer held appeal for many listeners. According to one of my anonymous interlocutors, the reworked lyrics were “no longer beautiful” [I. *tidak indah lagi*].

The musicians themselves also had limited options. Waldjinhah, whose voice was featured prominently on the album, was not able to use her metaphorical voice in shaping the lyrics. Instead, her material voice. Instead, her material voice was used by the organizers of this album as a medium for messages about Golkar. Waldjinhah’s coquettish vocals playfully invite listeners to support the political party. Collaborations with Golkar may have led to rewards such as new cars

or continued opportunities to perform, but the political climate of the late 1990s made invitations to perform and record for Golkar hard to decline. In the case of Bambang Hery, the obligation to perform for and vote for Golkar was connected to his position as a government worker. For others, their status as a musician necessitated taking on as many performance and recording opportunities as possible. Moreover, it was an honor to perform with the living legend, Waldjinah. Although Golkar won the election in 1997 per usual, *Waringin Sakti* served as something of a swan song for the New Order regime which fell the following year in 1998.

3.0 SANGGA BUANA: LANGGAM JAWA IN CENTRAL JAVANESE WEDDINGS

This chapter will describe the role of *langgam Jawa* music as performed by *campur sari* group Sangga Buana for weddings in Central Java. *Langgam Jawa* repertoire is performed by Sangga Buana as entertainment, and this repertoire is one element of many in the thick event of Javanese weddings which include dancing, stage banter, and comedic interactions with the guests. *Langgam Jawa* repertoire is a common, albeit not compulsory, feature of weddings in Central Java. Javanese brides, grooms, and their families may use this as an opportunity for identification with their Javanese heritage, whether through traditional dress or by hiring traditional music ensembles, even if these features are not otherwise a part of their everyday life. Javanese heritage, however, is not the only kind of identity in play when hosts select *campur sari* for a wedding ceremony. The selection of musical styles and ensembles at weddings is a potent site for examining processes of identification with multiple identities. *Campur sari* groups, including Sangga Buana, at once embody Javanese traditions in the way that they dress, in their use of Javanese language songs, and the way that they play a full Javanese *gamelan*, while also embodying modernity and the “international” in the way that they play keyboards and favor popular song forms like *langgam Jawa*. In this chapter, I will provide a foundation for thinking about identity and embodiment in *langgam Jawa*, provide background information about Sangga Buana, *campur sari*, and weddings in Java, and provide a detailed account and discussion of “being there” at a Sangga Buana performance on October 22nd, 2022.

3.1 Identity, Embodiment, and *Langgam Jawa*

The concept of identity is a problematic Western notion suggesting a static, essentialized self. Stuart Hall describes the way that identity operates “‘under erasure’ in the interval between reversal and emergence; an idea which cannot be thought in the old way, but without which certain key questions cannot be thought at all” (1996). Hall’s idea of identity under erasure refers to the deconstruction of the notion of a unitary, self-sustaining identity. Hall posits that, although identity is a problematic concept, it is central to thinking about issues of agency, about the process of identification that subjects participate in, and issues in politics, most importantly the relationship between identity and location as well as the instabilities that come along with that relationship.

The concept of embodiment is another useful concept in thinking through issues of agency and politics. I define embodiment as a dynamic unity of mind and body, approaching the body as a nexus of biologically enabled preconditions for experience which is conditioned by culture. The body is our means of being in the world: “far from my body’s being for me no more than a fragment of space, there would be no space at all for me if I had no body” (Merleau-Ponty 2002, 117). The way that people embody or perform their ethnic, linguistic, religious, gender, and national identities is informed by previous performances of these identities in a way that becomes intelligible as norms. Judith Butler’s work (1990, 1993) is helpful in understanding embodied performances as neither entirely a matter of nature nor entirely of culture, but instead as an active technique in which we enact or “do” identity, specifically gender identity in the case of her work. Butler writes that sex, like gender, is a construction of discourse although it is often construed as a material fact. Sex is materialized through a forcible reiteration of through norms and regulated ideals, positing “[t]hat this reiteration is necessary is a sign that materialization is never quite

complete” (Butler 1993, 1-2). Gender and sex are not singular acts but, instead, repeated performances.

Ethnomusicologist Timothy Rice outlines two lines of reasoning regarding the ways that identity is constructed in music. The first line of reasoning considers individuals to be agential in the construction of their own identities while the second, attributed to Foucault, posits that the self is a product of “regimes” and “discourses” and therefore not entirely agential (2017, 149). I conceive of identity construction as a blend of the two, as a sum of the choices that people are able to make in between regimes or their resistances to those regimes.

In order to think through issues of identity construction, it is important to understand Javanese conceptions of power. Benedict Anderson (1990) offers a helpful analysis comparing Javanese conceptions of power with those in the West. Anderson writes that in the West, power is perceived as abstract in that it does not “exist” but instead describes relationships; sources of power are heterogenous in that wealth, social status, or formal office could all be sources of power; there are no inherent limits to the accumulation of power; and that power is morally ambiguous in the way that it is not inherently perceived as legitimate and therefore subject to moral scrutiny (Ibid., 21-22). Meanwhile, Anderson describes power as “concrete” in Javanese conceptions writing that “Power exists, independent of its possible users” (Ibid., 22). Further, sources of power are perceived as homogenous and therefore and power in the hands of one group is equal to that of another (Ibid., 22-23). It follows that power does not raise questions of legitimacy or moral ambiguity because, “Power is” (Ibid., 23). While in Western thought there are no limits on the accumulation of power, the cosmos is neither contracting or expanding in the Javanese perspective and therefore the quantity of power in the universe is constant (Ibid.).

Rice writes that “music as a complex semiotic form with multiple features (melody, rhythm and meter, timbre, texture, and form) inherent in its very being would seem to provide an ideal sign for symbolizing multiple aspects of identity simultaneously and temporally” (Rice 2017, 148). The performance of *langgam Jawa* is context-sensitive and varies based on place, the type of event where it is being performed, and the specific amalgamation of performers working together. In the context of Sangga Buana’s performances, *langgam Jawa* is presented in *campur sari* arrangements (as opposed to *kroncong* or *gamelan*). To talk about *campur sari* is necessarily to also talk about *langgam Jawa*. In this chapter I am focusing on the social context of weddings and the way this context is particularly ripe for indexing multiple and intersectional facets of identity: ethnic, linguistic, religious, gender, and national identity.

One of the most obvious and undisputed features of *langgam Jawa* is the use of Javanese lyrics, clearly associated with members of the Javanese ethnolinguistic group. The melody and texture of *campur sari* arrangements of *langgam Jawa* imitates those of Javanese *gamelan*. Surakarta-based singer Sujiati, a member of Sangga Buana, remarks that “*langgam Jawa* has a Javanese identity and character.”⁸⁶ Her comment reflects the clear association between Javanese language and musical elements of *gamelan* with Javanese identity. The semantic associations of the timbre, however, are more complex. While the vocal timbre used by the *pesindhen* is very similar to what they might use for a *gamelan* arrangement of a *langgam Jawa* song, the timbre of the electronic drum kit and of the keyboard in particular signal a different set of associations.

In the late 1990s, the combination of *gamelan* instruments with keyboards in particular was an auditory signal of modernity (Cooper 2015, Supanggih 2003). One of my language teachers in

⁸⁶ Sujiati, personal communication, August 30th, 2021. [I. “*Langgam Jawa itukan identitas Jawa, ciri khas Jawa.*”]

Yogyakarta, Pak Suwanto, made an unsolicited comment to me about the way that *campur sari* was seen as modern [I. *modern*] in the 1990s.⁸⁷ I follow Barendregt in thinking of modernity as “a dynamic field of practices and ambivalent understandings regarding progress, social change, novelty, technology, and human agency” (2014, 4). Not everyone understood this musical addition as “progress” and some musicians and listeners still criticize its combination with *gamelan* instruments. Yet, as a music technology that began “trending” in Indonesia as early as the late 1980s,⁸⁸ the electronic keyboard was seen by some Indonesians as a symbol of the novel and the modern. This tension surrounding the keyboard in *campur sari* underscores Barendregt and Weintraub’s (2017) observation that “[s]truggles over the meaning of modernity...are nowhere more explicit than in the entertainment industry” (13). Even within a single ethnolinguistic group considering a single genre of music, the auditory signals of modernity are contested.

Peter Manuel writes about syncretic popular musics created by subcultures and the way that they simultaneously reflect multiple cultural orientations, both postmodern characteristics and more traditional elements (1995). While Manuel’s focus is towards migrant subcultures, I find many parallels in *campur sari* music. *Campur sari* is also enjoyed by Javanese people in diaspora, but my focus is on Javanese musicians living and working in Central Java. Manuel writes that “syncretic musics, like their senses of social identity, often self-consciously juxtapose or combine ancestral homeland traditions with the most contemporary cosmopolitan styles and attitudes” (1995, 227). In the case of my research, the “homeland tradition” of *gamelan* is still rooted where these musicians live now, and this music is juxtaposed with both *kroncong* and the sound of the keyboard which, at the time of its addition to *campur sari*, was considered cosmopolitan.

⁸⁷ Suwanto, personal communication, March 19th 2021.

⁸⁸ Kempling, personal communication, December 6th, 2023. Kathryn Emerson also writes that *dhalang* Manteb Soedharsono used keyboard in *campur sari* selections as early as 1983 (2022, 99).

I also agree with Manuel's critique of the literature of postmodernism in general, in the way that it falls short in fully grasping the complexity of meaning and interaction that coexist within many styles of syncretic music. This body of literature portrays postmodernism as an all-pervasive condition as opposed to an uneven one, and stresses the "depthlessness" (Jameson, 1991) of contemporary art. I find that the idea of *campur sari* as empty or depthless fails to capture how meaningful it can often be for those who play it and those who listen to it. An example of how meaningful this music can be is in the vows [J. *nadar*] that people sometimes make in advance of hosting *campur sari* groups like Sangga Buana. On February 1st, 2023, I witnessed another *campur sari* group called Mayang Arum, based in Klaten, play for a circumcision [J. *supitan*] as a fulfillment of one such vow. Group leader Arum Dyah Hapsari, pictured in Figure X, explained that "When people are in challenging situations/are suffering, they pray to God and accompany this prayer with a promise. So that later, if the prayer is answered they will keep their promise."⁸⁹ In this instance, a family member had been sick with no relief, so the host of the circumcision prayed for the family member's return to health, promising that if his prayer was fulfilled that he would host Mayang Arum at his son's circumcision event. During this event, the host performed a ritual called *ngluwari ujar* [J] wherein rice, coins, and woven young coconut leaves were thrown into the air from a plate. Then the host threw the plate on the ground and it shattered into pieces which is pictured in Figures 5, 6 and 7. *Ngluwari ujar* symbolizes that the host has fulfilled

⁸⁹ Arum Dyah Hapsari, personal communication via Whatsapp, February 1st, 2023. [I. "Ketika orang dalam keadaan sulit/menderita, kemudian mendapat permohonan doa pada Tuhan disertai janji. Bahwa nanti jika doanya dikabulkan maka dia menepati janjinya."]



Figure 6: A man who has made a vow [J. *nadar*] leans over with a plate during *ngluwari ujar*.

Photo by the author.



Figure 7: The plate is broken for the *ngluwari ujar* ritual to symbolize the man's release from the vow

Photo by the author.



Figure 8: The man walks away from the broken plate.

Photo by the author.

his promise to God and is now free from the vow that he made. Members of Sangga Buana told me that at least a few times every year, people will make vows [J. *nadar*] to host Sangga Buana in performance.

Many listeners associate *campur sari* with nostalgia and Peter Manuel writes that this can be viewed as a deliberate rejection of the postmodern condition in that it entails a retreat into earlier musical styles (1995, 229). For instance, Adi Wasono, an ISI Surakarta staff member who wrote his thesis on *langgam Jawa*, remarked that “[*Campur sari*] songs can really give you a sense of longing, so much so that you want to be nostalgic.”⁹⁰ Adi Wasono seems to lay out a spectrum of feeling wherein the longing invoked by *campur sari* songs can become so strong that it gives way

⁹⁰ Adi Wasono, personal communication, April 3rd, 2022. [I. *Lagu-lagu memang bisa mendatangkan kangen sehingga pingin nostalgia.*]

to full-blown nostalgia. Adi Wasono describes nostalgia as a surrender into memories of people, places, and things that, for him, circulate around the sound of Manthous (alternatively spelled Manthou's) in the 1990s.

Adi Wasono's comment is an example of the way that the semantic associations of musical elements are temporally and contextually dependent: the associations with the keyboard with modernity in the early years of *campur sari* have now shifted over time to associations with nostalgia. There is a generalized longing for the past but some of the residue from early associations with modernity remain. This is an example of what Turino (2008) describes as "semantic snowballing" wherein "[o]ld indexical connections may linger as new ones are added, potentially condensing a variety of meanings and emotions within a highly economical and yet unpredictable sign" (9). The 1990s associations of *campur sari* with modernity have accrued additional associations, in this case associations with nostalgia, but that does not entirely efface the older associations. I approach nostalgia as a force that *does* something, following Ange and Berliner in conceiving of one function of nostalgia as "the reification of social identities and the production of cultural boundaries in context of important changes" (2015, 10). This nostalgia is not simply a languishing in the past but a way to actively reify regional identity for Javanese people in the present.

In addition to identifying *campur sari*, and therefore *langgam Jawa* repertoire as played by *campur sari* ensembles, with pastness, the timbre of the keyboards also marks a departure from the purely Javanese associations with the lyrics, melody, and *gamelan* texture. In Java, I often hear the keyboard associated with Western music [I. *musik Barat*]. However, I favor *campur sari* superstar Manthous's use of the word international [I. *internasional*] to describe his associations with the keyboard (Mrázek 2005, 370). According to Mrázek, in the same way that English is

regarded as an international language, Manthous describes the keyboard scale as international (Ibid.). Mrázek also cites several newspaper articles from the late 1990s wherein authors debate issues and the potential for compromise between Javanese and “international” tuning systems (371).

At the same time, keyboard players in Central Java are actively Javanizing the keyboard not only by adjusting the tuning in order to match that of the *gamelan*, but also in the patterns that they play the keyboard. In reference to the keyboard player in her *campur sari* group, Arum Dyah Hapsari remarks that, “his role substitutes the *bonang*, substitutes the sound of the *gambang*”⁹¹ listing just some of the instruments that the keyboardist might imitate in terms of the patterns they play. In this way, the keyboardist complicates the international or Western associations of the keyboard.

In this chapter when I refer to “Javanese weddings” I am referring to weddings that I attended in and around Surakarta during three years of research between 2014-15, 2017-18, and 2022-23. All but two of the estimated thirty weddings that I attended included a *kroncong*, *gamelan*, or *campursari* performance. Of the remaining two, one featured an *orgen tunggal*⁹² performance and one featured an acoustic guitar performance. Many weddings in Java do not employ *kroncong*, *gamelan*, or *campursari* performances, instead opting for rock bands or religious music such as *qasidah*.

During which parts of the wedding ceremony was *langgam Jawa* performed in the weddings that I observed? Typically *langgam Jawa* can be heard during the three or so hours where

⁹¹ Arum Dyah Hapsari, personal communication, June 28th 2023. “Perannya dia menggantikan bonang, mengatinkan suara gambang.”

⁹² *Orgen tunggal* refers to a single keyboard player who might also sing, using programmed rhythms while also playing chords and melody. In the past twenty years, *orgen tunggal* has become a popular and relatively inexpensive option for events such as weddings.

the bride and groom sit in state and food is passed out to the guests. In my experience, *langgam Jawa* does *not* accompany sacred rituals within the wedding such as the *siraman* or *sungkeman* and it would certainly not accompany religious ceremonies such as the *ijab*. In other words, *langgam Jawa* is used for the public-facing, secular part of the wedding ritual wherein guests arrive to witness the union and be entertained. These entertainment portions, however, do not require *langgam Jawa* and many wedding hosts choose other genres such as *dangdut* or *pop*, sometimes hiring a rock band or an *orgen tunggal* to render a mix of genres. So this begs the question, why hire a *campur sari* ensemble instead of some kind of other music?

3.2 Weddings in Central Java

Apart from Pemberton's detailed studies of weddings in the New Order in Chapter 5 of *On the Subject of "Java"* (1994) and his 1987 piece "Musical Politics in Central Java (Or How Not to Listen to a Javanese Gamelan)," music at weddings in Central Java, or even weddings in general, have received relatively little scholarly attention. This begs the question: why are there not more studies of music and performance at weddings in Central Java? Weddings are a significant site for cultural production in that they entail specific rituals, clothing, and even musical repertoire that rarely, if ever, appears elsewhere. Further, weddings are a significant industry for the production of culture. For instance, video production companies are hired to create videos of weddings that are then posted to Youtube.

Pemberton cites several trends in weddings that started during the New Order, many of which still persisted to the time of my research in 2022-23. For instance, during the New Order a type of MC known as *pranoto adicara* began to be featured during weddings (Pemberton 1994,

225). *Pranoto aicara* use high Javanese to offer ceremonial commentary during rituals and special events. Another shift that occurred during the New Order is that the host-father remains highly visible during the wedding, whereas in the past he would have “withdraw[n] from the wedding scene as if absent” (Ibid. 221). Prior to the New Order, efforts to raise one’s social status through a well-run wedding would have happened discreetly but now the host-father plays a prominent role and any elevation of his social status happens directly with guests being made aware that he assumed responsibility for the event.

Weddings occupy the public imagination in Indonesia. In December 2022 during my fieldwork, billboards, media outlets, and social media were buzzing with news and photos surrounding the wedding of Kaesang Pangarep, the youngest son of President Jokowi, to fiancée Erina Gudono. The formal, religious ceremony (known as *ijab* which performs the “illocutionary task of marrying the bride and groom” (Schrauwers 2000, 859) took place in Yogyakarta and was followed by processions throughout the city. Then the festivities moved to Surakarta. Jokowi posted photos on Instagram of the family, all of the men in hot pink jackets and the women in matching flower-patterned *kebaya* and observing and participating in various parts of the traditional ceremony such as the *siraman*, a ritual bathing of the bride and groom. Figure 1 shows a post on Jokowi’s Instagram account featuring *sungkeman* wherein the bride and the groom pay respects to their parents while kneeling in front of them.⁹³ In the following days, residents of Solo went to the street to watch a parade of horse-led carts carrying the newlyweds dressed as Mangkunegaran palace royals.

⁹³ According to Pemberton (see chapter 5 1994), the *sungkeman* used to be performed only by the groom towards male authorities and this ritual was part of the *ijab*. Pemberton marks this shift to the inclusion of both the bride and the groom in the *sungkeman*, and the inclusion of the *sungkeman* in the public wedding ceremony, to the New Order.



Figure 9: A post on Jokowi’s Instagram account of Kaesang Pangarep performing *sungkeman*.

The marriage of Kaesang Pangarep and Erina Gudono was certainly more lavish than the typical wedding in Central Java, although many of the rituals and styles of dress are similar. Wealthier families might hold a wedding in a hotel or a social hall, but many weddings in Central Java take place in the home or at least in the village of the groom’s family. Because many people do not have homes that are equipped for the hundreds of guests who may arrive to the wedding, open-sided tents are often set up across the street from the home of the host family, creating a space where wedding guests can gather in plastic chairs with protection from the sun and rain. Alternatively, the ceremony may also be set up under tents in an open field near the host’s house.

Weddings are held throughout the year with the exception of Ramadhan, the fasting month, and the first month of the Javanese calendar, Sura, both of which change year to year if compared to the Gregorian calendar. Weddings are typically held in the morning or sometimes the afternoon on a weekend. The formal portion of weddings in Central Java is usually about three hours long although the after party, where most of the guests leave and the immediate family hangs out and does karaoke with the musicians, usually lasts another hour or two.

One thing that has always struck me about weddings in Central Java is the way that the seating is arranged. In Central Java the guests sit facing perpendicular to the newlyweds. Usually an aisle will cut across the seating with the bride and groom facing out towards the guests, and the guests facing one another on either side of the aisle. If there are live musicians, they will often be directly across and facing the bride and groom, creating a somewhat decentralized event space. While the bride and groom are certainly the central to the event, I posit that this formation both highlights the importance of hired music, as a symbol of prestige and cultural identity.

3.3 Sangga Buana, Campur Sari, and Langgam Jawa

Sangga Buana grew out of a *kroncong* group called Irama Melathi. Irama Melathi was formed in 1992 and three years later the members of this group transitioned into playing *campursari*.⁹⁴ They were joined by *gamelan* players and were led by Wasimin, a long-time friend of Manthous. At the peak of their activity in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the group did 40 performances in a single month and for one week they did not go home at all in between

⁹⁴ Iyok, personal communication, February 4th, 2023.

performances.⁹⁵ Not every month was this full during the late 1990s and early 2000s, but I include this anecdote as an indication of how active the group was at this time. During the peak of their activity, the group would only perform if every member was available for the event. During my fieldwork in 2022-2023, Sangga Buana played just a few performances each month and the majority of the musicians have other groups that they perform with more regularly. Drummer Tlonteng, for instance, has another *campusari* group called Sang Lelono. Keyboardist Joni plays *orgen tunggal* or with various bands for special events in addition to teaching arts in a middle school. The *pesindhen* all perform for *wayang kulit* and occasionally with other *campursari* groups. Now if one member is not available for a performance, it is their responsibility to find a replacement

A frequent point of discussion around *campursari* is tuning. Manthous's group Campur Sari Gunung Kidul, which my interlocuters describe as the most popular *campur sari* group, is known for retuning their *gamelan* to a diatonic tuning to match the keyboards and other diatonic instruments in the group. Members of Sangga Buana, however, proudly informed me that they did not retune their *gamelan* instruments. I later came to understand that their *pelog* set is, in fact, tuned diatonically which is not too much of a departure from traditional *pelog* tuning for *gamelan*. Sangga Buana's *slendro* set is in a standard tuning for *gamelan*. When the group plays a song in *slendro*, the keyboard players use settings that they have programmed into their keyboards in order to match the pitches played by the *gamelan*.⁹⁶ These settings are created in advance by using pitch correction to adjust notes to match the *gamelan* instruments and then save this information. Since every *gamelan* has a slightly different tuning, both in terms of the intervals between pitches and

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Joni, personal communication, October 3rd, 2023.

the overall register of the set, the settings that the keyboardists create will only match Sangga Buana's *slendro* instruments. Several members of Sangga Buana informed me that Manthous's instruments were tuned down to a rough equivalent of A440 in diatonic tuning. Meanwhile Sangga Buana's instruments are tuned around Bb which is typical to *gamelan* instruments. Members of the group say they felt that this higher [I. *lebih tinggi*] tuning added more energy to their performances.

The way that Sangga Buana has mediated tuning issues between the pitched *gamelan* instruments (*saron*, *demung*, *siter*) and the keyboards offers an interesting counternarrative to what Supanggah (2003) described as a “clash” in tuning systems and a binary division between what Cooper (2015) describes as “retuners” (musicians who retune their *gamelan* sets) and “keepers” (musicians who continue to use traditional *gamelan* tunings and “play *campursari* reluctantly and out of financial necessity” (73)). Sangga Buana disrupts the binary that Cooper sets out in that their *pelog* set is retuned while they have kept the *slendro* tuning for the other set. Cooper did not outline an option wherein the keyboards retune, thus preserving the traditional tuning system and also preventing any undesirable “clash” between the traditional and diatonic tuning systems. Mrázek (2005), offers rich details about Manthous, perhaps the most well-known *campursari* performer and composer, and his work in the 1990s, and describes the way that Manthous tuned his *gamelan* to match the keyboard. Technology does not always circulate evenly, but methods to retune the keyboards to match the *gamelan* set were reportedly available in some parts of Central Java as early as the early 1990s. According to Kempling who played keyboard for Ki Joko Edan for nine years, Ki Joko Edan used a traditional *gamelan* set during *wayang* while Kempling used the system of keyboard settings described above starting in the early 1990s.⁹⁷ For his *campursari*

⁹⁷ Kempling, personal communication, December 6th, 2023.

performances, however, Ki Joko Edan used a diatonic *gamelan* set so there was no need for Kempling to tune.⁹⁸ Joni from Sangga Buana described using these same keyboard settings when playing with the *slendro gamelan* set.⁹⁹

I also want to address Cooper’s comment regarding musicians’ “reluctance” to play *campursari*. Although I have met musicians who disparaged *campursari* or expressed concerns that the genre would “break tradition” [I. *merusak tradisi*], the members of Sangga Buana as well as musicians from other *campursari* groups that I have spoken with expressed enjoyment and even pride from playing this music. I asked my *kendhang* teacher Bambang Siswanto, who is from a long and esteemed lineage of traditional musicians in Klaten, how he felt about playing *campursari* and he said, “Good! As long as the tuning systems don’t clash.”¹⁰⁰ To be clear, there are certainly instances where the tuning systems do clash. Putri Anjarsari, a *sindhen* who performs frequently with Ki Purbo Asmoro, says that she does not enjoy performing *campur sari*, saying that it makes her “dizzy because the notes are mixed up.”¹⁰¹

3.4 Being There/the Thick Event

This section of this chapter is a distillation of my recollections of “being there,” my field notes, and a Youtube video made by Studio Mentari of a wedding on October 22nd, 2022 where Sangga Buana performed. During special events like weddings, it is very common for the family hosting the wedding to hire a video crew, usually of two or three people, to film the event and

⁹⁸ Kempling, personal communication, October 8th, 2023.

⁹⁹ Joni, personal communication, October 3rd, 2023.

¹⁰⁰ Bambang Siswanto, personal communication, October 26th, 2022.

¹⁰¹ Putri Anjarsari, personal communication, July 23rd, 2023. [I. “*pusing karena nadanya campur campur*”]

upload it to Youtube. In these videos, the viewer can see the band as well as footage of the guests and the way that they are reacting to or interacting with the music. In the following pages, I show the songs that Sangga Buana performed while I weave in my field notes. The blue boxes show time stamps, the singer(s), the musical piece and information about the genre or musical treatment of the piece for the first 3 hours and 20 minutes of the wedding. My aim is to create a thick description of the wedding by providing information about the music that was played overlaid with a narrative of my own experience:

08:38-20:40 Sujati “Ayak Ayak” classic gamelan

21:00 Maratus “Podang Kuning” langgam Jawa campursari

1:05:00 all five pesindhèn “Ayak Ayak Hong” classic gamelan

1:08:00 all five pesindhèn dangdut “Ini Rindu” dangdut



Figure 10: All five *pesindhen* sing “Ini Rindu” during the wedding.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdnxYHaMQ2g>

1:13:00 Maratus “Tari Gambyong Pareanom” classic, tari gambyong

1:29:50 Maratus “Podhang Kuning” langgam Jawa campursari

I rent a motorbike from a friend for 25.000 rupiah¹⁰² (\$1.62) for the day to go see Sangga Buana play in Trucuk, Klaten. I use Google Maps to navigate to a pin that one of the band members, Iyok, had sent me earlier in the morning. The ride takes about an hour and fifteen minutes from where I live just outside of Surakarta. Yesterday I asked Iyok what kind of event (a concert, wedding, circumcision) this was and he didn't know, not unusual for a group like this.

¹⁰² *Rupiah* is Indonesia's currency. All footnotes were not part of my field notes and were added as I wrote my dissertation.

Players are informed of the date of the event, but since they are picked up by a driver and will wear basically the same style of clothing for each event, they don't really receive or need more details in advance. Initially Mas Iyok thought the event was at night and then informed me yesterday that the event would take place in the morning. I've spent enough time in Java to know that if an event is held in the morning, that's a good sign that it's a wedding. But having been away from Java for almost four years, it somehow slipped my mind. Sure enough, as I near the event area I saw signs reading "Pernikahan Joko dan Defi" ("Joko and Defi's Wedding"). I show up to the marriage ceremony in hot pink pants and a t-shirt while most of the other guests are dressed quite formally. I apologize repeatedly for being dressed inappropriately. No one is letting on that they mind, perhaps out of an obligation to be gracious to guests or, upon seeing that I am a foreigner, they decide to let me off the hook because I don't know better.

The wedding tent has a beautiful archway set up with huge bunches of bananas, a reog¹⁰³ mask, and some jathilan¹⁰⁴ horses. When I pass through the archway, I can see that the audience is separated into two inward-facing groups that are mixed in terms of age and gender. I am welcomed warmly and shown to one of the plastic chairs where I can sit among the guests. The bride and groom are at the front with their names written on the wall and their parents are seated on either side. Sangga Buana is set up on the opposing side of the tent, facing the bride and groom. Sangga Buana has a huge banner behind them reading "Campur Sari Sangga Buana" with an image of one of the structures from Prambanan, a 9th century Hindu temple in Central Java.

I sit down next to the guests and immediately one of the MCs, Glendoh, invites me to sit in the plastic chairs next to the pesindhen. At this moment all three of the MCs; Glendoh, Wahyu,

¹⁰³ Reog a traditional dance featuring wherein the performer wears a lion headdress with a peacock feather decoration.

¹⁰⁴ Jathilan, alternatively known as *kuda lumping* or *jaran kepong*, is a traditional dance wherein the performer "rides" a flat, woven bamboo horse prop.

and Bayu (a father-son duo who double as MCs and dancers), are standing in front of the stage. The MCs thank their hosts and the video shooting team as a show of respect and use high Javanese as part of this demonstration.

Mas Glendoh: *Injih matur nuwun Bapak Pambiworo ingkang sampun paring wekdal malih dumatheng kawula sak kanca kadang-kadang Campur Sari Sangga Buana.*

(In high Javanese): Yes, thank you Bapak for giving your time and inviting myself and the members of Campur Sari Sangga Buana.

Mas Wahyu: *Siang puniko nyambut damel sesarengan kaliyan AAN audio system ingkang mijil saking ing laladan saking Rejo Dadi, Rejo Dadi, saking Rejo Dadi. Kanca-kanca video shooting*

(In high Javanese). This afternoon we are working together with AAN audio system from the territory of Rejo Dadi, Rejo Dadi, from Rejo Dadi. Our video shooting friends.

Mas Glendoh: *Sing kagungan dek AAN.*

(Mix of high and low Javanese). Who are here with AAN.

Mas Wahyu: *Vidio shooting saka ngendi doh.*

(In low Javanese) Wait where are the videographers from?

Mas Glendoh: *Saking pundi? Studio Mentari saking pundi Mas?*

(In high Javanese) Where? Where is Studio Mentari, where Mas?

Mas Wahyu: *Ceper, Klaten.*

(He names the place) Ceper, Klaten.

Mas Glendoh: *Semoga semakin sukses semuanya ya!*

(In Indonesian) Hopefully more and more success to you all!

Glendoh opens an envelope and reads a request from one of the wedding guests for a langgam Jawa song called “Lali Janjine.” The request is signed by Pak RW 9, the head of a local district. The note is written in high Javanese and Glendoh mentions the amount of money that Pak RW included, 100.000 IDR (\$6.50), and all three MCs thank him profusely and wish him success and a long life.

Before I sit down, I greet all five pesindhen: Sujiati, Elida, Arum, Putri, and Maratus. Some of them I had known from my time in Java before while others were unfamiliar. All of the women are in full makeup, sanggul,¹⁰⁵ and black velvet kebaya, all typical for this kind of event but notable today because it is exceptionally hot in the tent. Many of the wedding guests are fanning themselves with the little green plates that some of the snacks had arrived on. Throughout the event, typical wedding fare is served: cakes, risoles,¹⁰⁶ then soup with chicken, hot sweet tea, then plates with rice, beef skin, and cucumber. Intermittently the pranoto adicara takes over the microphone to describe the event and the families of the bride and groom in high Javanese.

1:40:00 Arum “Lali Janjine” langgam Jawa campursari

Elida is called to fulfill Pak RW’s request along with Arum, a guest pesindhen from outside Sangga Buana. Arum sends Elida to the center of the tent while Arum stays close to the stage. A moment later Wahyu joins Arum and Bayu walks out to join Elida. As Elida and Arum trade verses in the song, Wahyu and Bayu dance beside the women. For the first half of the song, the band

¹⁰⁵ A *sanggul* is a hairbun extension that women in Java often attach to the back of their heads during formal or traditional events. For *pesindhen*, wearing *sanggul* is almost mandatory.

¹⁰⁶ *Risoles* are savory pastries, usually with a meat filling.

plays a rhythmic treatment that is heavy on kendhang and very light on the drum set. During this section, Arum and Elida do not move their hips, only making rolling gestures with their hands and arms. Wahyu and Bayu, meanwhile, often have their legs wide or drop into crouching positions, take up more space on the floor, and occasionally make suggestive thrusting motions with their hips. The drummer signals a break (andhegan) after the refrain in the song and their pesindhen banter with the MCs for a few minutes. Elida starts the last verse and the band reenters, switching into a more danceable feel as the whole song form starts over. The drum set features more prominently and the pesindhen also begin dancing with their whole bodies, rolling their hips but keeping their legs together, in part because their sarong¹⁰⁷ are tied too tightly to permit opening their legs. Wahyu and Bayu wear looser sarong with pants underneath, allowing for a fuller range of motion.

2:09:47 Sujiati and Putri “Caping Gunung”/”Gubug Asmara” langgam Jawa

All four performers sit down when the song is complete. The three MCs banter, offering gratitude to the sound and video crews, and eventually call the song “Caping Gunung” by Gesang Martohartono, perhaps one of the most popular langgam Jawa songs. Glendoh calls Sujiati and Putri. A minute later the pesindhen call me up to join them and sing.

Mbak Sujiati: Caping gunung caping gunung kuwi bahasa inggrise opo?

(Low Javanese) What’s Caping Gunung in English?

Mbak Putri: (In English) Like...in the mountain...

¹⁰⁷ A *sarong* is a length of cloth typically worn around the waist by people of any gender.

Hannah: (In English) *Mountain hat!*

Mbak Putri: (In English) *Mountain hat! Come here please!*

Mas Wahyu: (In English) *Come here!*

Mas Bayu: *Monggo-monggo*

(Javanese) Please go ahead!

Mbak Putri: *Iki ketoke putih iya ireng padha wae.*

(Low Javanese) (lit.) Here it looks white yeah. Black, it's all the same. (She's referring to me, saying that I look white but with a suggestion that underneath my clothes I'm actually "black." Javanese people often use the low Javanese word "ireng" [lit. black] to refer to brown skin. All of this is implied, complying with Javanese ideals of indirectness [J. *sanepan*].

Mas Glendoh: *La yo timbang doh penasaran mau wis tak tekoke!*

(Low Javanese) Before all of you are curious, I'll just ask! (He's suggesting that everyone wants to know what I look like underneath my clothes, so he'll just go ahead and ask me!)

Mbak Sujiati: *Apa iya... iya Mbak iya-iya anu asline ireng asline?*

(Low Javanese) What ya, ya Mbak ya ya ...are you black inside/within?

("Asli" can mean "originally" or in this case "inside," "internally," or "within.")

Hannah: *Asline?*

(Low Javanese) Originally? (All of this indirectness is going completely over my head. I think they're just asking me where I'm from and I'm not sure why they're talking about "blackness.")

Mbak Sujiati: *Asline ireng*

(Low Javanese) Black inside/within?

Hannah: *Asline Amerika.*

(Low Javanese) I'm originally from America.

Mbak Putri: Ya Amerika ya from Amerika.

(Mix of low Javanese and English) Oh she's from America. (Putri says this with a smile, seeing the pivot that I performed unwittingly with the word "asli," steering the conversation back to polite territory.)

Although I sing "Caping Gunung" frequently with kroncong ensembles, and therefore in a diatonic approximation of slendro tuning, it's been many years since I attempted to sing this song in true slendro tuning with a gamelan ensemble. The MCs and pesindhen invite me to sing the bawa, a solo unaccompanied vocal opening for the song, but I defer to them since I know I am unable to lean on the gamelan to help me stay in tune. Wahyu and Bayu take turns doing what is called "jenggleng" wherein the MCs jump and land in tandem with a loud, clashing hit from the gamelan, often making a kind of bobbling movement with their bodies as though they are a spring settling back into place. The MCs land very close to the pesindhen, or in this case me, closer than would be otherwise socially acceptable. Wahyu prepares for a jenggleng as the drummer plays, then as he goes to jump and the band does not play the clashing hit, defying expectations and, in turn, creating a musical joke. After a few more lines of the bawa, one of the wedding party guests brings out a woven bamboo hobby horse that Wahyu straddles and begins using for a dance called jatihlan. He crouches low and looks at the ground, pulsing with a musical accompaniment called reyog (used for several dance styles). Sangga Buana begins to build musical tension, pushing the

*tempo periodically as the electric guitarist plays distorted solos and the pesindhen sing out senggakan.*¹⁰⁸

Wahyu dances with the bamboo horse through the aisle, making motions as though the horse is bucking. Bayu arrives and grabs the bamboo horse from his father. Some of the guests stand up as Wahyu and Bayu tumble and roll in the aisle leading up to the bride and groom, trying to catch a video on their phones. Finally, Wahyu and Bayu return to where the musicians are standing, Glendoh sings the last line of the bawa, and the song “Caping Gunung” begins.

Dhek jaman berjuang/ During that time of struggle

Njur kelingan anak lanang/ I remember my son

Biyen tak openi/ I used to take care of him

Ning saiki ana ngendi?/ But now where is he?

Jarene wis menang/ They say the struggle was won

Keturutan sing digadang/ Fulfilling what was desired

Biyen ninggal janji/ Back then he made a promise

Ning saiki apa lali?/ But now has he forgotten?

*Neng gunung tak jadongi sega jagong/ In the mountain, I provided him what I could*¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Raditya (2013) defines *senggakan* as a sound resembling the *kendhang*, usually done by human vocalization, that adds to the overall energy of the piece.

¹⁰⁹ “*Sega jagong*” literally translates to “corn rice” meaning a daily staple of corn to eat. Many people in Central Java think of corn as something that poor people eat, preferring rice. The underlying meaning here is that the narrator of the song did not have the finest food to provide to his son, but he offered what he had.

Yen mendhung tak silihi caping gunung/ If it was cloudy, I gave him shelter¹¹⁰

Syukur bisa nyawang/ Thank goodness we can see

Gunung ndesa dadi rejo/ This mountain village now prosperous

Dene ora ilang/ But we won't forget

Nggone pada lara lapa/ Those times of pain and hunger

We only go through the AA 'BA' form once although typically it would be repeated. Instead, Mas Glendoh calls "Gubug Asmara," another langgam Jawa song that had been requested earlier and the pesindhen switch seamlessly into this song.

Yen liwat aku kelingan/ When I go past I remember

Gubug kae biyen tak nggo leren/ That hut there where I used to rest

Neng cagak kebak tulisan/ There was a post covered with writing

Warna abang tanda isih prawan/ In red as a sign of virgins

Jenenge gubug asmara/ It was called hut of love

Biyen kae tak nggo andum tresna/ Back then where I shared love

Tanpa bantal tanpo klasa/ Without a pillow or a woven mat

Bot abote ketaman asmara/ Struck with love

Gubug kae nyimpen wadi/ That hut holds secrets

¹¹⁰ "Caping gunung," the namesake of the song, literally translates to "mountain hat" and refers to the wide, conical hats made from woven bamboo that farmers often wear in Central Java. In this line, the narrator says they offered this hat as protection from the rain and I chose what I thought was a more elegant translation.

Nganti besuk ora bakal lali/ Even in the future I will not forget

Gubug kae kebak crita/ That hut there is full of stories

Wayah wengi nganti gagat rino/ From evening until the sun is up

Catetan sak jroning ati/ These are the notes from my heart

Datan luntur soyo merak ati/ The memories don't fade and there is even more loving

Aku kowe dadi garwa/ You and I are married now

Merga leren neng gubug asmara/ Because I rested in that hut of love

2:33:30 Maratus, Putri, Sujiati, Elida “Gela” langgam Jawa Sragenan minor

2:44:48 Arum “Sri Huning” langgam Jawa campursari

2:54:46 Sujiati “Blitar” langgam Jawa kroncong

3:02:15 Elida “Sotya” dangdut

3:08:03 Putri “Manis” langgam Jawa Sragenan AA’BB’

3:13:10 Maratus “Ojo Dibandingke” pop Jawa

3:18:18 Arum “Joko Tingkir Ngombe Dawet” dangdut

3.5 Discussion

During this whole performance, the video snaps between focusing on Arum and Wahyu, Elida and Bayu, and focusing on the bride and groom as they pose for a photographer (separate from the video crew) with friends and family members. Usually the subjects take the first photo with a soft smile, and the second photo is free form [I. *bebas*]: some people give a thumbs up or make another hand gesture while others raise their eyebrows and make more animated facial expressions.



Figure 11: From left, Glendoh, Wahyu, Pak Subarjo, and Bayu holding a *jathilan* horse that is used for dancing. Photo by author.

During the first 3 hours and 20 minutes of the wedding, 15 musical selections were performed. Of these 15 selections, 8 of them were some kind of *langgam Jawa* whether

Sragenan,¹¹¹ *kroncong*, or *campursari*. I include these distinctions because many of my interlocuters stress their importance. The terms *Sragenan*, *kroncong*, or *campursari* designate the genre origins of the song, not the way it was played in the wedding. For instance, when Sangga Buana plays a *langgam Jawa kroncong* song such as “*Caping Gunung*,” they play it with a full *campur sari* ensemble and use musical treatments that are typical to *campur sari* such as a vocal timbre that is typical to *campur sari* as opposed to *kroncong* (see Chapter 2) and a combination of *gamelan* instruments, *kroncong* instruments, and keyboards. An example *langgam Jawa kroncong* is Gesang Martohartono’s “*Blitar*” and an example of *langgam Jawa Sragenan* is S. Harsono’s “*Manis*.” Over half of the selections performed were *langgam Jawa*. This underscores the importance of *langgam Jawa* when Sangga Buana performs in weddings. The performance of *langgam Jawa* in weddings simultaneously appeals to desires to preserve Javanese culture and to consume entertaining performances of it. Listeners who might not be able to sing along to classic *gamelan* pieces will often have the words or at least the melody to a few *langgam Jawa* pieces memorized. The repetitive AA’BA’ song form is easier for listeners to catch onto. Many listeners perceive the rhythms used in *campur sari* arrangements of *langgam Jawa* repertoire as more danceable and lively than classic *gamelan* arrangements. Meanwhile the tuning, texture, and language of *langgam Jawa*, in recalling semantic associations with Javanese traditions, offering listeners a way chance to identify with their Javanese heritage in a presentation that is also “semantically snowballed” with something modern, something international. When *langgam Jawa* emerged the late 1950s and early 1960s and was still considered to be a genre, this same semantic snowballing would not have been present. Only in the transformation of *langgam Jawa* to a

¹¹¹ A musical treatment that comes from the city of Sragen in Central Java and features driving, danceable rhythms.

repertoire with the contributions of Manthous and singers like Nurhana and Sunyahni, did *langgam Jawa* become a repertoire that crossed genres and took on more layers of meaning.

Counting from the moment that the song “Caping Gunung” was called to the moment they switched to “Gubug Asmara,” a full twenty minutes had elapsed. The *bawa* and the song created space for everything else that Sangga Buana had to offer: dancing, stage banter, and comedic interludes. I later found out that the *jathilan* performance in the middle of “*Caping Gunung*” was a special request from Pak Subarjo, shown in Figure 11, the father of the groom. That day Pak Subarjo was wearing a black formal jacket, a *sarong*, a *blangkon* with his long, black hair flowing out underneath, and he had a *keris*¹¹² tucked in the waist cloth over his *sarong*. Pak Subarjo said that he is a big supporter of Javanese arts and was even holding a *jathilan* performance in his village the day after this wedding. I asked why he picked Sangga Buana and he said because they are “*nasional*” and because he wants to “preserve Javanese culture” [J. *nguri-uri budaya Jawa*]. Hiring a *campur sari* group allows a host to demonstrate their care for “preserving Javanese culture” while offering a bit more versatility than a *gamelan* group. Sangga Buana is able to play the classic pieces such as “*Ayak Ayak Hong*” and “*Kebo Giro*” that might be part of a wedding, while also incorporating drum kit into *campur sari* arrangements later on in the ceremony and distorted electric guitar for *dangdut* requests after the wedding is officially over.

In excerpts of dialogue that I included, there is a contrast in the polite shows of respect to the hosts and the video shooting team with the sexual innuendos just preceding the performance of “*Caping Gunung*” and “*Gubug Asmara*.” The use of Javanese language is crucial to indexing Javanese culture in the performance of *langgam Jawa* pieces as it is to indexing Javanese culture in the context of the wedding described. Sangga Buana is expected to entertain the audience and

¹¹² A *keris*, alternatively *kris*, is a dagger that is most commonly used as a spiritual object but can also be a weapon.

part of this is through their improvised comedy routines. The sexual innuendos were part of the entertainment and were spoken in low Javanese. At the same time, MCs are expected to be able to use high Javanese certain parts of the performance, such as moments of expressing thanks to the hosts or video crew. High Javanese is used to express politeness and is also seen as the most appropriate use of Javanese for formal events.

In the field notes above I describe the way that a *langgam Jawa* piece, in this case “*Caping Gunung*,” can be extended during live performances in order to accommodate other elements of the performance. The actual music might only be a few minutes in duration but will often be stretched to twice its original length or more to create space for dancing, banter, and slapstick routines. Members of Sangga Buana told me that “*Caping Gunung*” is one of their favorite repertoire choices for this kind of extension. Sangga Buana applies the same technique to other *langgam Jawa* but “*Caping Gunung*” seemed to be extended the longest and most frequently. This extension, however, is not specific to Sangga Buana’s performances. I have seen other groups extend *langgam Jawa* songs in this way, not just for weddings but also for *wayang*.

Usually a when *langgam Jawa* is played, regardless of genre, the song form is repeated once. Two cycles of *langgam Jawa* piece with a *bawa* usually takes around 7 minutes. During the wedding in Klaten on October 22nd, 2022, Sangga Buana extended the *langgam Jawa* song “*Caping Gunung*,” usually around 7 minutes long with the *bawa*¹¹³ and two cycles through the 32-bar form, to around 20 minutes in length. The group did not, however, repeat the “*Caping Gunung*” song form and instead switched to “*Gubug Asmara*,” another 32-bar *langgam Jawa* song in the same tuning system. One cycle through “*Caping Gunung*” and one cycle of “*Gubug Asmara*”

¹¹³ A *bawa* is an unaccompanied vocal opening which typically uses a kind of metered poetry called *macapat*. It can be used to open long, classical *gamelan* pieces or to open *langgam Jawa* songs.

would take about the same amount of time as two cycles of “*Caping Gunung*.” They began hailing the guests’ attention by calling the title of the first song, “*Caping Gunung*,” a favorite among Javanese listeners. By calling out the title of the song, the MCs and *pesindhen* already begun to build anticipation. Then the performers called me onto the stage and engaged me in few minutes of suggestive stage banter. 3 minutes and 47 seconds passed before Sujati began the *bawa*. Then Wahyu and Bayu engaged the guests with several minutes of dancing, tumbling in the aisles, and direct interactions and jokes with guests, interspersed with more lines of the *bawa*. Finally, after 13 minutes and 55 seconds, the 32-bar song form started. One cycle through both *langgam Jawa* songs took a total of 6 minutes and 18 seconds, fairly typical even though there was a brief break for more stage banter in between. Therefore, the bulk of the stretching was done in anticipation of the *langgam Jawa* songs, instead of extending the time during the songs themselves. In this performance, the other performance elements were front-loaded; the guests’ attention was grabbed by calling out a popular song, more anticipation was built by interspersing lines of the *bawa* with dancing and slapstick routines, and then finally the actual *langgam Jawa* songs were performed. The anticipation and performance of the *langgam Jawa* songs acted as a way to hold together diverse modes of entertainment.

In the event described above, my own presence was part of the spectacle. *Pesindhen* or guest singers from outside Java have been popular at least since Ki Nartosabdho started making recordings in the 1970s. In several of Ki Nartosabdho’s recorded performances, the *dhalang*, the shadow puppeteer, will have a conversation with a *pesindhen* from Banyumas, a regency in southwestern Central Java, and then ask her to sing a song from that area. The Javanese dialect from the Banyumas regency is intelligible to Javanese speakers from other areas, “but it is different enough to sound funny to them” (Mrázek 2005, 406). The appearance of *pesindhen* from outside

of Java, in *wayang* and special events, continues today with the popularity of singers such as Elisha Orcarus Allasso, a *pesindhen* who was born and raised in Java but pretends to be from Sulawesi in staged performances. During comic interludes, she stands and has conversations in Javanese language with an approximation of an accent from Sulawesi, an area with a number of local languages completely distinct from Javanese.

Within the past ten years, *pesindhen* from outside of Indonesia such as Hiromi Kano from Japan, Agnes Serfozo from Hungary, and Megan O'Donoghue Williams from the United States have been highly sought after as guest stars in *wayang kulit* (Meloni 2021, 46). These women have made careers from their performances throughout Indonesia and videos of them have been circulated widely through Youtube and Whatsapp. This historic precedent for foreigners, whether from within or without Indonesia, as part of the spectacle of public performances, also may have had an impact on why I was allowed to the wedding in the first place even though I was dressed inappropriately and why I was asked to sing even though I could only bluff my way through “*Caping Gunung*” in a *slendro* tuning for *gamelan*.

Listeners and musicians often call for the preservation of Javanese culture in parallel to videos, recordings, and performances of *langgam Jawa*. For instance, on the cover a *campur sari* album posted on Youtube in 2020, which includes several *langgam Jawa* songs, the user has written “*Mari Lestarikan Warisan Leluhur*” (“Let's Preserve the Heritage of Our Ancestors”) and many of the commenters echo these sentiments. About an hour and a half into Sangga Buana's performance on October 22nd, Glendoh said “preserve Javanese culture and noble, highly valued culture” [J. “*Nguri uri budaya Jawa lan adiluhung.*”]. Hiring performances of or listening to *langgam Jawa* repertoire in *campur sari* arrangements is one way to express a sense of belonging with Javanese and assert a set of values around Javanese culture as a whole.

When Pak Subarjo described Sangga Buana as “*nasional*” he was referring to their formerly heavy touring schedule and their renown throughout Java as well as other parts of Indonesia. According to Manthous, Sangga Buana can also be seen as “*internasional*” because of their use of keyboards and diatonic tuning systems but Pak Subarjo did not use this term. This could be due to that fact that, although they use keyboards and tuning systems that are seen as international, they have not received any significant international attention. Although Manthous once prophesized that *campursari* would “become the music of Indonesia” (Mrázek 2005, 368), this has yet to manifest let alone becoming the music of the world. Instead, *campur sari* remains a regionalized embodiment of Javanese culture through language, musical elements, and dress.

3.6 Conclusion

Returning to my earlier question, “why hire a *campur sari* ensemble instead of some kind of other music?,” the host father Pak Subarjo said he hired Sangga Buana because they are “*nasional*” and because he wants to “preserve Javanese culture” [J. “*nguri-uri budaya Jawa*”]. Many *campur sari* groups, including Sangga Buana, at once embody Javanese traditions in the way they dress, the language of the songs, and their use of a full Javanese *gamelan*, while also embodying modernity and the international in their use of keyboards and their performances of popular song forms like *langgam Jawa*. Hiring Sangga Buana was in keeping with Pak Subarjo’s promotion of traditional Javanese cultural forms such as *jatihlan* and also was a way for him to demonstrate prestige for his guests because Sangga Buana has had national circulation.

The elements of Javanese culture evident in weddings may not be a part of everyday life for the newlyweds or their families. The bride on October 22nd, for instance, wore hijab in her daily

life, making an exception on her wedding day not to cover her head in observance of her religion. If music is, as Rice states, an “ideal sign for symbolizing multiple aspects of identity simultaneously and temporally” (2017, 148), *langgam Jawa* is a prime example. Within a single performance, Sangga Buana attends to markers of Javanese heritage in their use of a full *gamelan* set, Javanese language used in singing, traditional clothing, and also in the use of high Javanese by the MCs, a sign of respect that many Javanese people lament as an endangered skill. At the same time, the use of the keyboard signals modernity and international identity. My own presence and incorporation into the show was part of this international identity, and the *pesindhen* and MCs used my foreignness for their comedic stage banter and to lend to the overall spectacle. Recalling Rice’s description of music as ideal for symbolizing multiple facets of identity simultaneously *langgam Jawa* signaled this range of Javanese and international identities at once and this music acted as one element of many within the entertainment at Central Javanese weddings.

Subarjo’s motivation for hiring Sangga Buana was linked to a nostalgia for their heyday in the late 1990s and early 2000s when the group toured frequently. *Campur sari* was meaningful enough for Subarjo that he chose to feature it in one of the most important life cycle ceremonies in his son’s life: the marriage ceremony. *Campur sari*, although it entails both postmodern characteristics and more traditional elements, is not empty or depthless in the way that Jameson (1991) describes. Subarjo’s decision to hire Sangga Buana was not a languishing in the past but a means to actively reify and shape regional identity for Javanese people in the present. The *langgam Jawa* selections that Sangga Buana performed were carefully chosen, often with themes of love whether romantic or between a father and a son. These songs were one element of many in the wedding among the clothing, the food served, and other aspects of the entertainment, that Subarjo and the family chose in a public expression of identity.

4.0 VOCAL TIMBRES AMONG GENRES IN LANGGAM JAWA

On June 27th, 2023, *campur sari* and *gamelan* singer Anik Sunyahni, typically known simply as Sunyahni, stepped onto the edge of a dark stage otherwise occupied by a full orchestra and all of the members of *campur sari* group Sangga Buana for an event called Endahing Budaya Larasing Campursari. The *gender*¹¹⁴ player opened with a few tones to set the mood and give Sunyahni her first pitch for the *bawa*¹¹⁵ of a *langgam Jawa* piece called “*Nyidam Sari*” (“Essence of Craving”). She sang just three words: “*Duh wong bagus*” and the audience broke into applause and someone whistled. “*Duh*” is short for “*aduh*” and can be an exclamation of either pain or pleasure, in this context I would translate it to “oh my god!” “*Wong bagus*” translates to “attractive person” or in this case, because a woman is singing, is assumed to mean “handsome man.” At the point when the audience applauded, they could barely see the renowned singer in the darkness on the side of the stage. No other instruments besides the *gender* could be heard. She had only uttered four syllables and all four are on the same tone. These words, although she delivered them with great feeling, are treated as a kind of filler and appear in many *langgam Jawa* songs. This is not the first performance of the evening, so this was not the applause of excitement when a performance finally begins. The audience was not applauding for Sunyahni’s appearance, the sound of the instruments, the melody, or the lyrics; there had not been time to full identify any of these other factors. Instead, their response was to the sound, the immediately recognizable timbral quality, of Sunyahni’s voice.

¹¹⁴ *Gender* is a type of metallophone used in *Javanese* gamelan music and played with two padded mallets.

¹¹⁵ A *bawa* is an unaccompanied vocal opening which typically uses a kind of metered poetry called *macapat*. It can be used to open long, classical gamelan pieces or to open *langgam Jawa* songs.

Sunyahni sang “*Duh wong bagus*” in a clear, strident timbre. To my Western ears, her vibrato is relatively slow for the note (approximately a C#5 in diatonic tuning which would be 554.37 Hertz but Sunyahni sang around 550 Hertz to match the tuning of the accompanying *gender*) that she was singing. She used what I hear Western singers refer to as a “head” voice wherein the resonance is perceived to happen in the head as opposed to the chest. When Javanese singers describe where this resonance happens, they often point their heads or make a sweeping gesture around the top of their heads. The intensity of the timbre was maintained until the end of each syllable, as opposed to Western art singing where the intensity may fall off at the end of each phrase, culminating in a crisp “s” to end the syllable “-gus.” During my fieldwork I noticed that audiences only sometimes applaud at this moment in the performance, when the singer has delivered just the first phrase of the *bawa*. It is not obligatory the way that applause might be at the end of a seated performance of Western art music in the United States.

Figure 1 shows Sunyahni performing center stage once the lights have come up. Some of the members of Sangga Buana are visible wearing orange jackets and seated behind her on a low stage. Although Sunyahni wears a *jilbab*¹¹⁶ in her everyday life, when she performs she always wears *sanggul* and *kebaya*. When we met for an interview a few weeks after Endahing Budaya Larasing Campursari, she was wearing a *jilbab* and I asked her why she prefers to wear *sanggul* on stage. She answered, “Because my trademark as Anik Sunyahni is wearing *sanggul*!”¹¹⁷ Sunyahni even expressed concern that audiences would not recognize her without *sanggul*, demonstrating the deep connection between the clothing and hairstyles that she has chosen and her stage persona.

¹¹⁶ A *jilbab* is a headscarf worn by Muslim women in Indonesia.

¹¹⁷ Anik Sunyahni, personal communication, July 5th, 2023. [I. “*Karena ciri khas saya Anik Sunyahni yaitu paket sanggul!*”]



Figure 12: Figure 1: Sunyahni singing at Endahing Budaya Larasing Campursari in Surakarta on June 27th, 2023. Photo by author

On May 17th 2021, *dhalang* Ki Purbo Asmoro livestreamed a *wayang*¹¹⁸ from his home in Surakarta, Java, a common adjustment from live performances for many performing artists in Indonesia since the COVID-19 pandemic. This *wayang* was unusual in that it featured a small *kroncong* group, just *cuk*, *cak*, *selo*, and *biol*, during the entertainment interludes. Figure 2 shows

¹¹⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCgTiQ5rTgE>.

the *kroncong* group and the three *pesindhen* kneeling in front of the *wayang* screen in matching red *kebaya* who took turns singing *kroncong* favorites like “*Putri Solo*” (“Solo Girl”). After each song featuring the *kroncong* group, Ki Purbo Asmoro read quiz questions that viewers could answer to through the messaging app Whatsapp, an adaptation designed to encourage viewer interaction and engagement during the pandemic. After a bit more banter, he called on *pesindhen* Sri Harjutri to sing “*Gambang Semarang*,” a popular *kroncong* song named after a type of small *gamelan* ensemble from the city of Semarang, Central Java. Figure 13 shows Sri Harjutri performing from a kneeling position as she holds the microphone. She smiled, opened her mouth wide, and swayed while she sang. Her tone is full and round, what some listeners might call a “chest” voice, and her vibrato is rich. I was impressed by the versatility of her performance because earlier within the same *wayang* she performed *sindhenan* with the “head” voice and slow vibrato associated with *sindhenan*. Here she was switching to an entirely different timbre and mode of behavior. I was also struck because typically *kroncong* singers perform while standing. Sri Harjutri was performing what I expected in terms of vocal timbre for *kroncong*, but within the social context of a *wayang* and while still keeping her body respectfully at the same level as the instruments. Just a few minutes before, Ki Purbo Asmoro commented to one of the other *pesindhen*: “You can perform *sindhenan* and you can sing *kroncong* songs. *Sindhen* these days have to be like that.”¹¹⁹ His comment, although it does not express precisely when, indicates a shift from *pesindhen* formerly needing to specialize only in *sindhenan*, to a current demand for them to be more versatile and able to sing a range of genres with the appropriate vocal timbre. This

¹¹⁹ [J/I. “*Isa nyinden, isa nembang kroncong. Sindhen sindhen di era sekarang ya kudu ngono.*”] Here, Ki Purbo Asmoro uses an alternative word for *pesindhen*.

versatility increases the range of jobs these singers are able to do, meaning they are in higher demand for paid performances. In this chapter, I examine the timbral

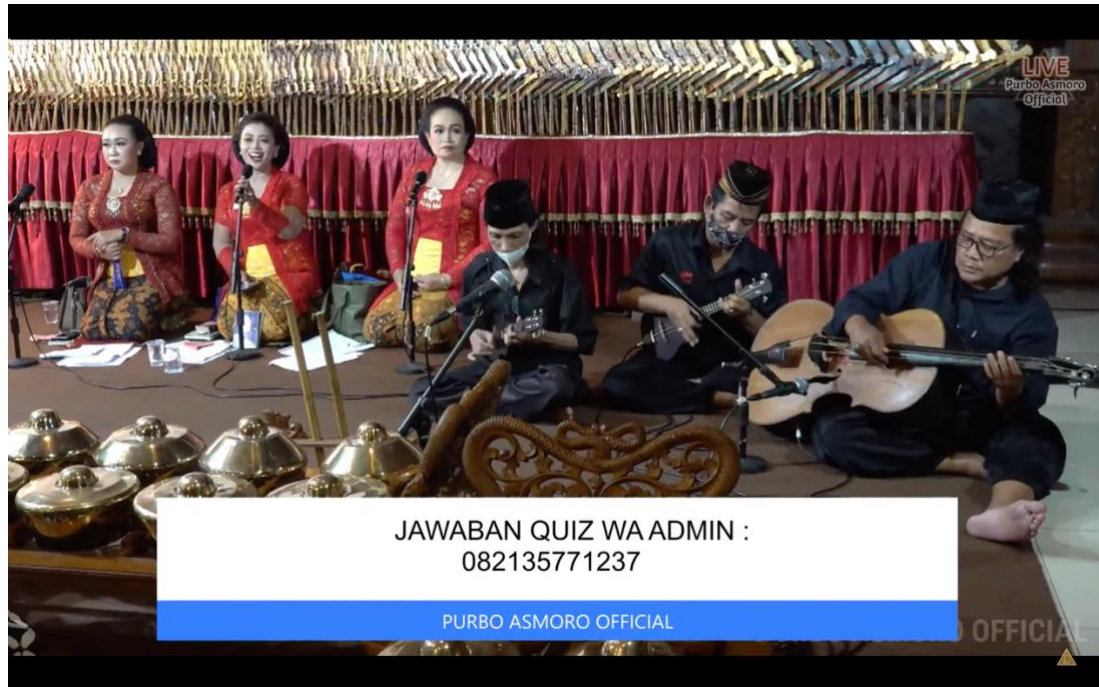


Figure 13: Three pesindhen (from left Diah Widyawati, Sri Harjutri, and Anis) kneeling in front of a wayang screen and Sri Harjutri performing “Gambang Semarang.” Three *kroncong* players sit just in front of them: from left Sapto Haryono (*cak*), Canting (*cuk*), and Purwanto (*selo*).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCgTiO5rTgE>.

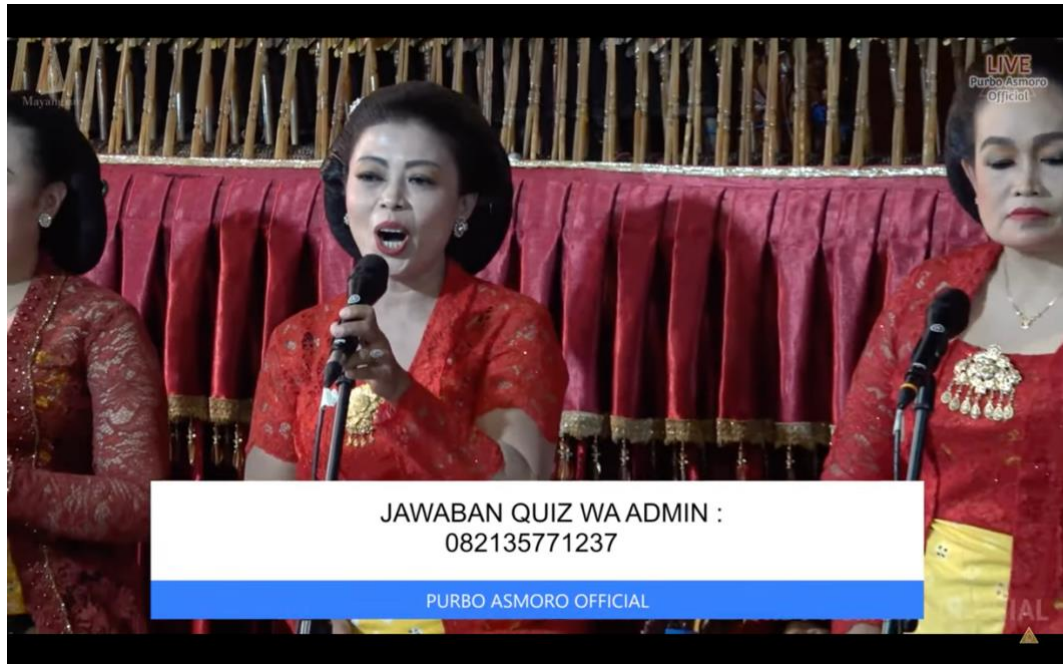


Figure 14: Sri Harjutri (center) performing “Gambang Semarang.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCgTiQ5rTgE>.

expectations for *kroncong* and *gamelan* singing, the ways that women learn how to switch between these timbres, and what meanings they associate with the same song presented in *kroncong* and *gamelan* contexts through interviews, participant observation, and recordings with twelve women singers from Central Java.

Singers in Central Java will often comment when they feel that a singer is using a timbre that falls outside of their expectations for the particular genre that the singer is performing. I will provide examples of two singers who criticized other singers when they thought that the appropriate timbre was not being produced. One of my interlocutors suggested that Endah Laras sounded too *kroncong*-like when she performed *sindhenan*, although Endah Laras is very experienced in *sindhenan*. This singer claimed that when Endah Laras was young, she never sang with a *gamelan*, only singing with *campursari* ensembles and *kroncong* ensembles. In reality,

Endah Laras's father was a *dhalang* and she performed with him and with other *dhalang* in her youth, well before *campursari* was common. Endah Laras does have a unique sound. People I interviewed are able to recognize recordings of her voice immediately although this fact is not exclusive to Endah Laras. Yet, Endah Laras has also received Western art vocal training which may be a factor in what I am calling her "unique" sound. She uses a slightly more open, round sound, even while performing *sindhenan*. Another possibility is that the interlocuter who finds Endah Laras's voice to be outside of timbral expectations for *sindhenan*, might be focused on Endah Laras's public association with *kroncong* and *campursari* as she is most well-known for performing these two genres.

One of my interviewees also criticized a certain well-known *pesindhen* for "yelling" and not sounding sufficiently flirtatious [I. *kemayu*]. This interviewee demonstrated this *pesindhen*, stiffening her neck and forcing out harsh tones in what otherwise sounded like *sindhenan* timbre. Then she demonstrated what she thought was a more appropriate timbre for *sindhenan*, tilting her head coquettishly and using a lighter timbre at a lighter amplitude, cascading through *cengkok* effortlessly with a gentle smile on her face. This interviewee seemed to mainly be criticizing this *pesindhen* on her failure to appropriately perform femininity within this interviewee's timbral expectations of *sindhenan*. Building on de Beauvoir, I follow Iris Marion Young's understanding of femininity not as an essence that all women possess simply by being biologically female but, instead, as a "set of structures and conditions which delimit the typical situation of being a woman in a particular society, as well as the typical way in which this situation is lived by the women themselves" (1980, 140). *Kemayu* is an Indonesian word associated with femininity. The anonymous interviewee in this example was speaking from the context of Central Java in 2023 but this definition is fluid and subject to change. In the words of Suzanne Brenner, "neither gender nor

subjectivity are fixed across time and location” (1998, 18). The interviewee’s demonstration shows that *kemayu* for *sindhenan* reflects not only an expectation of a feminine sounding timbre but also an entire affect, reflecting a playful openness not only in sound but also in physical presentation. What my interlocuter described as “yelling” would likely not be desirable in the context of *kroncong*, but during my three years of research in Indonesia I have yet to hear someone describe another *kroncong* singer as “yelling.”

While some singers are criticized when they do not meet the timbral expectations of a certain genre, other singers who are able to switch smoothly between the timbral expectations for certain genres are praised for their flexibility and breadth. In this chapter I examine the timbral expectations that women singers in Central Java have for *kroncong* and *gamelan* singing, the ways that these singers learn how to switch between these timbres, and what meanings they associate with the same song presented in *kroncong* and *gamelan* contexts. I will mainly compare *langgam Jawa* sung in the contexts of *kroncong* and *gamelan* as most of the singers I interviewed said there were no major differences in vocal timbre or style between singing with a *gamelan* ensemble and singing with a *campursari* group.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ Drawing from *Duet serasi Campursari* (1996), Mrázek writes that two of Manthous’s collaborators, *pesindhen* Lasmini and *penyanyi kroncong* Minul, were quoted saying “Singing Campursari songs is indeed different from *cengkok sindhenan* [vocal patterns or style in gamelan music] and from *kroncong* patterns” (2005, 371).

4.1 Timbre

During an ethnomusicology seminar in the 1960s at UCLA, Charles Seeger asked an international group of students, “how long a musical excerpt would one need to hear in order to recognize its culture of origin?” (Gjerdingen 2008, 93). The students guessed that it might take a considerable amount of time but in Seeger’s seminar they found that they can recognize the cultural origin of the music almost immediately. A later study inspired by this line of inquiry has shown that most people can recognize a musical genre within the first few seconds, even the first fraction of a second, when they hear a song (Gjerdingen 2008). Since this is usually not enough time to hear a chord progression or even a melody, we make these discernments based on the instrumentation, production style, and, perhaps most importantly, timbre.

Timbre is notoriously hard to define and Cornelia Fales’s work illuminates precisely *why*: timbre is a perceptual attribute and, as a result, is highly subjective. Fales refers to the combination of the ear and the auditory cortex as the “auditory system,” noting the way that pitch and loudness are immediately perceptible to the ear while timbral perception must be processed by the auditory cortex. This processing, which Fales refers to as “perceptualization,” is conditioned by an individual’s experience. Therefore, it is likely to change over time and to be influenced by repeated exposures to a particular sound. In this way, “perceived timbre exists in a very real sense only in the mind of the listener, not in the objective world” (Fales 2002, 62).

One of the roles of hearing is to give listeners information about their environment. Timbre is particularly well-suited to inform listeners about their environment because it carries the information about a source of a sound, the location of the source, and also information about the environment through which the sound has traveled to the listener (Fales 2002, 57). Digital sound analysis, however, reveals that what we hear is dramatically different than the sound that is actually

emitted. Digital sound analysis indicates characteristics of *physical* sound while our auditory systems, the process of perceiving sound, changes those physical sounds. Fales refers to this as a “paradox of timbre” because “while timbre is a dimension of central importance to identifying sources, it is also the dimension that is most divergent from the sound in the physical world” (Ibid. 58). Timbre is a highly subjective aspect of sound which lends to some of the pitfalls and challenges in discussing this topic.

Some of the themes in Nina Eidsheim’s *The Race of Sound* (2019) resonate with the paradox described by Fales. Eidsheim notes that listeners often cannot accurately identify information about sources when listening to human voices. Most people believe with great conviction that they can accurately identify a person’s gender, race, and age just by listening to their voice. She writes that “This position is grounded in a belief—and truth claims—about the voice as a cue to interiority, essence, and unmediated identity” (2019, 2). Eidsheim dismantles the idea of the voice as stable, as able to yield precise answers about a person’s skin color or gender. Materially similar voices may sound completely different, demonstrating the infinite set of possibilities within a set of material parameters. Meanwhile voices that are materially different may be mistaken for one another and we have all heard vocal impersonators who can cross race, class, age, and gender (Eidsheim 2019, 7).

The sound of the human voice is generally impacted by the length and diameter of the vocal tract and the size of the vocal folds. Yet even specific material aspects of voice are malleable. As an example, there are not statistically significant differences in vocal tract length or size in the vocal apparatuses of prepubescent boys and girls. Instead, boy and girl voices are distinguished through processes of enculturation both by the vocalizers themselves and by the listeners. Vocalizers (in this case prepubescent boys and girls) signal gender through their choice of words,

intonation, or prosody. Meanwhile listeners bring gendered expectations to the context of listening, and are “thus unable to hear a voice outside of gendered terms” (Eidsheim 2019, 7). According to Fales, the human auditory system identifies sound sources according to “its own expectations, sources that are consistent with similar sources identified in the past, or that have characteristics typical to an environment” (2002, 58). The perception of timbre is highly subjective and listeners’ expectations and experiences will inevitably shape the way they hear human voices. Since we live in a gendered society, listeners necessarily bring this conditioning to their experiences of listening.

4.2 Timbre and Langgam Jawa

I first began attempting to sing *langgam Jawa* songs alongside *kroncong* ensembles in Surakarta, Java in 2014. I spent the year there studying Central Javanese *gamelan* with the support of a Darmasiswa scholarship, attending *gamelan* classes at Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Surakarta (Indonesian Arts Institute of Surakarta) during the day and spending time with *kroncong* groups at night. Later during the year, I took *sindhenan* lessons with *gamelan* expert Pak Suropto, occasionally doing public performances both in the context of *kroncong* and *gamelan*.

Javanese language uses retroflex consonants (*dh* or *th* for instance, wherein the tongue reaches back towards the hard palate) and several subtle variations of vowel sounds, both of which are not used by most English speakers. It took well over a year for me to start to grasp these new sounds and my tongue stumbled over the unfamiliar shapes, often to the amusement of my fellow classmates and teachers. Another challenge was finding my place within the accompanying ensemble, both in *kroncong* and in *gamelan*, as I had to adjust my listening towards new sonic

landmarks. No matter how diligently I counted out the measures, I often found myself missing entrances or stretching phrases out beyond their intended length.

Timbre was another issue; I learned that there are different expectations in terms of timbre based on whether one is singing with a *kroncong* ensemble or a *gamelan* group. I will use “*Yen Ing Tawang Ana Lintang*,”¹²¹ one of the most frequently played pieces of *langgam Jawa* repertoire, as an example. This song is frequently sung in the contexts of *kroncong*, *gamelan*, and *campursari*. I discovered that when I sang “*Yen Ing Tawang*” with a *gamelan* ensemble, it is deemed more fitting to use a slower vibrato [I. *vibra*]¹²² and a timbre that was distinct from what I had learned from Western choir singing and folk singing. Judith Becker writes that *sindhengan* has a “rather tense, nasalized quality” (1980, 122) and Margaret Kartomi, describing a specific *pesindhengan*, writes, “The singer's vocal timbre is characterized by its thin clarity and large percentage of high overtones and nasal resonance” (1973, 126) but goes on to say that the word “nasal” is “ambiguous” (Ibid.). This issue of ambiguity is a common one when discussing timbre as many practitioners and vocal teachers slip into metaphors when trying to explain how to achieve a desired vocal timbre. The same piece sung with a *kroncong* ensemble should have a fast vibrato and a sound that I have heard described as more full or round [I. *lebih bulat*]. Once again, the words “full” and “round” are ambiguous. What is a round sound really? While several singers I interviewed did use words like round [I. *bulat*] or refer to the “head” voice, I only encountered one

¹²¹ “If There’s a Star in the Sky,” hereafter referred to as “*Yen Ing Tawang*.”

¹²² In a study of singing in West Java, Sean Williams writes about four kinds of vibrato that singers described. One of these types was known as *vibra* which is “a very slight vibrato, close to a tremolo” (2001, 188). ISI Surakarta faculty Danis Sugiyanto outlined a few different Javanese terms that he has heard people use to describe voices, some of which I did not hear my interlocutors use: *apik* (good) vs. *elek* (bad), *halus*(refined) vs. *kasar* (coarse or rough), *landhung* (using a long, supported breath) vs. *cekak* (a short phrase with insufficient breath support), *anteb* (heavy) vs. *entheng* (light), and *bening* (clear) vs. *reget* (dirty). Danis Sugiyanto, personal communication via Whatsapp, January 29th, 2024.

singer who thought of *sindhenan* as somehow relating to the nose. In describing *sindhenan*, Sunyanhi said that it is “from the nose of course” while *kroncong* singing is “from within.”¹²³ However, my *sindhenan* teacher Rini Rahayu referred to *seriosa* as having a nasal quality saying, “It seems like the voice goes to the nose.”¹²⁴ This is an example of the subjective nature of timbre: while Western listeners might describe *sindhenan* as nasal, Javanese *pesindhen* might describe *seriosa*, which is closely associated with Western art singing, as having a nasal quality. To complicate matters further, the appropriate timbre for a vocal genre can develop over time as expectations and the genre itself changes.

Until I studied *sindhenan*, I always thought of my vibrato as something natural, that the beating or oscillations of my vibrato were based on the pitch that I was singing and to my distinct material voice. I thought of a singer’s vibrato as something essential as opposed to something enculturated. I could turn it on and off, singing a *bel canto* style note with relatively little vibrato and then switching it on towards the end of the note, but it was news to me that one could control the rate of the oscillations. I still have not learned how to control my vibrato in this way and therefore have never achieved the desired vibrato for *sindhenan*.

Many singers from Central Java are able to switch between genres, often even within the context of a single performance. In order to understand this switching, I draw upon the theory of multivocality which was developed by scholars such as Katherine Meizel and Nina Sun Eidsheim. The notion of vocality on its own is deeply related to Steven Feld’s notion of *acoustemology* which he defines as one’s “sonic way of knowing and being in the world” (Feld and Brenneis 2004: 462; Feld 1996). Multivocality is more than simply singing with “many voices.” Meizel writes that

¹²³ Anik Sunyahni, personal communication, July 5th, 2023. [I. “*dari hidung lah,*” “*dari dalam*”]

¹²⁴ Rini Rahayu, personal communication, July 15th, 2023. [I. *Agak-agak suaranya larinya ke hidung.*]

multivocality describes “multiple ways of being and acting in the world through voice, and of applying the intersubjectivity and interstitiality of voice to navigate the in-betweens and border crossings of 21st-century identities” (2020, 7). Multivocality is a vocal negotiation of identity. When singers cross stylistic, social, genre, or cultural borders, Meizel understands this as the singers “negotiating their narratable selves by singing with many voices” (Ibid.).

Katherine Meizel writes that, “multivocality in singing is neither precisely analogous neither to multilinguality nor to the related concept of code-switching” (2020, 13). Some ethnomusicologists such Mark Slobin have recognized the utility of the concept of code-switching, and have expanded its scope, noting that music is “richer in codes than language” (1990, 63). Yet code-switching has also drawn critiques. Meizel draws on Vershawn Ashanti Young’s work on language to point out that the term “code-switching” suggests that there is a uniformly standard English spoken by white Americans and that this standard is somehow superior to dialects spoken by racial minorities. Meizel favors the theory of multivocality in that it simultaneously points to the movement of voices across genre and the movement of voices across the identities and positionalities that a person might claim. Singers in Central Java use multivocality to establish and cross group boundaries, moving between different groups in a single performance.

While the timbral expectations between *kroncong* and *gamelan* are quite pronounced, most of the singers I interviewed claimed that the timbre as well as the *cengkok* (melodic embellishments or melismas) used for *campur sari* are the same as those used for *gamelan*. There is little to no timbral switching done between performances of *campur sari* and *gamelan*, but the staged bodily comportment may differ somewhat which will be explained below. Further, while I do mention *cengkok* in this chapter, my focus is on timbre, of which vibrato is a large part. *Cengkok* is an important distinguishing factor between the singing styles of these genres, but it is distinct from

timbre. Bodily comportment is also key in distinguishing performances of these genres. While the distinctions between the staged bodily comportment for *kroncong* versus *gamelan* have softened or blurred over the past 30 years, many of the expectations for vocal timbre have remained.

Gamelan has an extensive and rich repertoire and often features female singers known as *pesindhen*¹²⁵ while *kroncong* singers are simply referred to as *penyanyi*. *Penyanyi*, a term that is gender neutral and not specific to any single musical genre and, like other terms, is subject to change over time in response to social conditions. *Pesindhen* use a florid vocal style with highly detailed ornamentation (Sutton 1987, 120) and usually perform in a kneeling position in front of the *gamelan* ensemble. Many Indonesian language articles have been written about *sindhenan* (for example Astari & Saepudin 2020, Handayani 2018, Rahayu 2018, Suyoto 2020) however they generally focus on *cengkok* and *wangsalan* as opposed to issues of timbre [I. *warna suara*]. *Wangsalan* is a type of text that is used during *sindhenan*, often using deeply complex poetry and sometimes conveying advice that is believed to reflect Javanese values (Rahayu 2018, 42).

In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it is believed that *pesindhen* blended with the other instruments of the *gamelan*, being one sound out of many in the texture as opposed to being featured or highlighted within the ensemble (Sutton 1987, 111). This, however, changed with the advent of amplification and *pesindhen* now use microphones while the rest of the *gamelan* ensemble accompanies them (Ibid.). This development has been critiqued by some Western *gamelan* scholars (see Keeler 1987) as an unfortunate result of Western influence, while others

¹²⁵ Some scholars, including Nancy Cooper, favor the term *waranggana* as opposed to *pesindhen*. One reason that Cooper cites is that “‘pesindhen,’ in addition to referring to Javanese women singers with the *gamelan* orchestra, can also be used more generically as ‘singer,’ which is its literal meaning. It does not specify gender, genre, or ethnicity” (1994, 31). Perhaps because her work was in Gunungkidul in the 1990s, *pesindhen* was used more generally. In my experience in Central Java, however, I have never heard it used as a generic word for a singer. I used *pesindhen* here to reflect the term most commonly used by my interlocutors.

assert that the use of amplification is a response to that fact that audiences and musicians in Java appreciate and value the foregrounding of this musical part (Cooper 1994). In the distinct yet related context of West Java and *wayang golek* (wooden rod puppet theater), Weintraub notes that amplification allowed spectators to “discern fine aesthetic distinctions between singers” (2004, 65) which, in turn, contributed to the increasing prominence of *pesindhén* in contrast with the *dhalang*.

Gamelan, like *kroncong*, has been shaped by multiple influences. *Gamelan* was impacted by the Islamic world starting with the development of Sufism in Java in the 9th century (see Sumarsam 1992, Chapter 1) and occasionally mixed with European band music starting in the late 17th century (see Sumarsam 1992, Chapter 2). Further, advances in technology have also impacted performance practices for *gamelan* as shown in the example above. Despite and perhaps because of these hybrid influences, a distinct set of *cengkok* and a desired timbre have developed in association with *sindhénan* as practiced in Central Java.

Kroncong is often associated with Western music. *Kroncong* musicians in Surakarta love to discuss the origins of this music and I am continually surprised when, in response to the question “where does *kroncong* come from?” many musicians say “the Portuguese.” True, the instruments can be traced to the Portuguese expeditions to what is now Indonesia starting in the 15th century, but in his 2013 dissertation, Philip Yampolsky describes the links some scholars create between *kroncong* music and Portuguese musical influences as “exaggerated” (277). My opinions echo those of Yampolsky, and I personally conceive of *kroncong* to be hybrid genre that only Indonesians can truly claim as their own.

This association with Western music is also somewhat supported by the way *kroncong* developed alongside a genre called *seriosa*, art songs sung in the Malay and Indonesian language (Mohammed 2021, 3). *Seriosa* gained prominence in Indonesia starting in the early 1950s through

the national Bintang Radio (Radio Star) competition which featured three categories, namely *kroncong*, *pop hiburan*, and *seriosa*. Bintang Radio judge Solomon Tong described *seriosa* as manner of singing which emulates the “classical style” (Ibid. 12). It was common for singers to compete in two or all three categories for Bintang Radio. Amik Dasuki, a national Bintang Radio winner competitor who was born in 1941, initially entered the *seriosa* category in Bintang Radio and lost. Yet in 1962 she went on to compete and win in the *kroncong* category and then went on to sing at the 1964 World’s Fair in New York City.¹²⁶ This is historical evidence for the value of being able to switch vocal timbres: a singer could win contests and national recognition which could, in turn, lead to other professional opportunities.

Amik Dasuki’s initial training had been in *seriosa* with a teacher from Australia whose name she could not remember.¹²⁷ Adji Muska, a singer who won the *kroncong* category for Bintang Radio Jawa Tengah (Radio Star Central Java) in 1974, initially learned to sing from a Dutch missionary named Pastor Van Deirse (1915-1985), learning vocal techniques from a Western teacher before switching to *kroncong*. Figure 4 shows the winners from the Bintang Radio TV Jawa Tengah in 1974. While male *kroncong* singers in the 21st century occasionally choose to wear suits like the men in this photo, male *kroncong* singers also sometimes choose Javanese clothing items just as *blangkon* and *sarong*. The women in the *pop hiburan* and *seriosa* categories are wearing sleeveless, floor-length gowns in Figure 4 while the woman in the *kroncong* category is wearing *kebaya* with a sash over her shoulder, similar to what many female *kroncong* singers wear today. Two differences are that many women *kroncong* singers in the 21st century favor see-

¹²⁶ Amik Dasuki, personal communication, August 2nd, 2018.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

through, lacey *kebaya* and traditional *batik*¹²⁸ prints for their *sarong*, whereas the *kebaya* pictured is in a solid fabric and the print of the *sarong* seems bold and perhaps not traditional.



Figure 15: Bintang Radio TV Jawa Tengah 1974. From the right is Adji Muska and Ipuk Sunarmi, winners of the *kroncong* category. In the center is Drs. Edy Hendarno and Hartati, winners of the *pop hiburan* category. On the left is Darti Suhardi and Sulisty Sh, winners of the *seriosa* category. Photo used with permission from Adjir Muska.

Kroncong singing and *sindhenan* developed as discrete performance practices although both have been impacted by cultural exchanges. Both styles of vocalization are affiliated with distinct expectations for timbre. The following three sections unpack information from interviews with singers who frequently perform *langgam Jawa* repertoire: how they themselves describe differences between timbres and how they switch, the way they learn how to produce timbre, and

¹²⁸ *Batik* is a technique of wax-resistant dyeing to create a pattern on an entire piece of cloth. This technique originated in Java and is popular throughout Indonesia.

how they perform these sounds on stage. Finally, I provide an examination of timbre based on my interlocuter's responses to two musical excerpts from an episode of the Indonesian talk show *Kick Andy*.

4.3 Differences in Timbre And Switching

I interviewed twelve singers in Central Java, most living in or nearby Surakarta, to understand more about the way they perceive differences between presentations of *langgam Jawa* repertoire in *kroncong* versus *gamelan* settings. I chose to focus on women singers because my interlocuters have told me that there is "something missing" if there is not a female singer present for an event. Having singers of both genders is valued but if no male singer is present it is not considered to be an issue. I highlight women's performance practices of *langgam Jawa* because their voices and bodies were and continue to be center stage in the production and spread of this repertoire. A single *langgam Jawa* song can be transformed through elements of timbre which is typically produced by women's voices.

Two of the singers I interviewed, Yanti Mboel and Indriyati, were known for and identified themselves mainly as *kroncong* singers or *penyanyi* of *kroncong asli* repertoire. The repertoire of *kroncong asli* and the associated vocal timbre is distinct from *langgam Jawa kroncong*, although these singers could also perform *langgam Jawa kroncong*. Two singers were known mainly for singing with *gamelan* ensembles, namely Mulyani and Rini Rahayu. Sunyahni, Nurhana, and Eka Suranti were adept in singing with *gamelan* ensembles but were also known for *campursari*. The remaining five, namely Sujiati, Sri Harjutri, Endah Laras, Putri Anjarsari, and Arum Dyah Hapsari,

could switch easily between all three genres. I asked these singers questions about their music education, the differences they perceived in timbre and vibrato [I. *vibra*] between genres, what characteristics they associated with each genre.

Many, but not all, singers in Central Java are able to practice multivocality and switch between genres, often even within the context of a single performance. Surakarta native Endah Laras is an excellent example of such singers. Since Endah Laras's father was a *dhalang*, in her youth she spent a lot of her time both hearing and performing *gamelan* music. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, her career was focused largely on *campur sar*. Now she is best known as a *kroncong* singer and one of her trademarks on stage is strumming along with her *cuk* while she sings. Endah Laras explains that in the context of *gamelan*, the style of singing should be restrained, more "basic" [I. *dasar*] because the singer needs to be balanced in with the other instrumentalists; it is considered inappropriate for the singer to show off too much.¹²⁹ Yet while singing with a *kroncong* group instead of a *gamelan* ensemble, she notes that "we have room for more interpretation because we become leaders in front of the rest of the group."¹³⁰

Many of the singers that I interviewed described *sindhenan* as using a "head" [I. *kepala*] voice or made gestures towards their head while describing *sindhenan*. Many of them said that *kroncong* singing uses a "chest" [I. *dada*] voice, sometimes placing their hand on their chest while they said this. Western listeners often use these terms as well. In an article about the vocal quality of *pesindhen* and *seriosa* singers, Gloria Poedjosoedarmo draws on American vocal pedagogue William Vennard (1967) and writes that, "The terms 'chest voice' and 'head voice' apparently originated because voice teachers in the past thought that the voice was 'placed' in these parts of

¹²⁹ Endah Laras, personal communication, October 10, 2019.

¹³⁰ Endah Laras, personal communication, October 10, 2019. "Kita menginterpretasikan lebih karena kita menjadi leader di depan."

the body. However, ‘placing’ the voice anywhere except in the vocal cords which produce it, as Vennard stresses repeatedly, is not possible” (1988, 96). In reality, these differences in timbre are produced by the larynx, not switching between the head and chest.

The singers I spoke with also made distinctions between breathing techniques for *kroncong* and *gamelan* vocalization. Engagement of the diaphragm was more closely associated with *kroncong* singing. Arum Dyah Hapsari, a singer well-versed in all three genres, says that she employs her diaphragm when sings *kroncong* and the preparation of the breath is longer. Meanwhile she described the breath required for *sindhenan* as “more relaxed” [I. *lebih santai*] but also “pressed” [J. *mipit*] describing a kind of concentration she perceived in *sindhenan* breath preparation.¹³¹ This initially struck me as a contradiction but over time I have come to understand it as a breath preparation that is simultaneously narrow and powerful, using a minimal amount of effort to ultimately create a potent sound.

While the word “diaphragm” [I. *diafragma* or *diafram*] was used more frequently in reference to *kroncong* singing, the word “stomach” [I. *perut*] was also used. *Kroncong* singer Indriyati, pictured in Figure 5, asserts that *kroncong* singing and breath preparation comes from the stomach while *sindhenan* comes the throat.¹³² My *kendhang* teacher Bambang Siswanto, who happens to be from the same family of musicians as Arum Dyah Hapsari, had a different perspective, asserting that *sindhenan* also comes from the stomach, even going so far as to say that older *pesindhen* usually have thicker midsections precisely because they have built of so much physical power and muscle in this part of their body.¹³³

¹³¹ Arum Dyah Hapsari, personal communication, June 28th, 2023.

¹³² Indriyati, personal communication, June 27th, 2023.

¹³³ Bambang Siswanto, personal communication, December 22nd, 2023.



Figure 16: : Indriyati in the foreground singing with a kroncong group called Cahaya Irama. The musicians from left are Pak Kriswanto (cak), Pak Haris (cuk), Pak Wira (selo), Pak Muh Solihin (bass), and Pak Sodik (flute). Photo by the author.

The timbre for *seriosa* came up unsolicited in several of my interviews. Putri Anjarsari, pictured in Figure 6, commented that the vibrato typically used for *kroncong* is almost like the vibrato for *seriosa*.¹³⁴ This also came up during my interview with Arum Dyah Hapsari. She and her husband Sarwanto, a *gamelan* musician who was also present for the interview, agreed that the timbre was similar for *kroncong* and *seriosa*.¹³⁵ The social contexts for these genres seems to be

¹³⁴ Putri Anjarsari, personal communication, July 23rd, 2023.

¹³⁵ Arum Dyah Hapsari and Sarwanto, personal communication, June 28th, 2023.

distinguished in recent decades and since I began my research in 2014 I have only seen two events with both *kroncong* and *seriosa* performed together. However, there seem to be lingering effects from *seriosa* in timbral expectations for *kroncong* that musicians still respond to and identify.



Figure 17: A selfie by Putri Anjarsari (right) with the author (left). Used with permission.

The singers I interviewed who were able to switch seamlessly between genres all demonstrated what I heard to be timbral similarities respective to genre. Putri Anjarsari, a *pesindhen* who has experience and skill in all three genres, described the appropriate timbre for *sindhenan* as “more clear” [I. *lebih jelas*] while the appropriate timbre for singing *kroncong* is “softer” [I. *lebih lembut*].¹³⁶ Rini Rahayu and Sujiati both described the differences based on speed; they said vibrato for *sindhenan* is slower and vibrato for *kroncong* singing is faster. Rini Rahayu

¹³⁶ Putri Anjarsari, personal communication, July 23rd, 2023.

also described the vibrato for *kroncong* singing as “*kental*” and “*tebal*.”¹³⁷ Both of these adjectives mean “thick” with “*kental*” connotating a material with a thick or dense consistency such as a creamy sauce while “*tebal*” refers to a dimension like a thick book. Sujiati used similar language, also saying that the vibrato for *kroncong* singing is “thick” [I. *tebal*] and she went on to describe *sindhengan* as “light” [J. *entheng*].¹³⁸

During interviews I asked all of the singers to demonstrate one verse of “*Yen Ing Tawang*,” first in a *kroncong* style and then in a *gamelan* style. The five singers who were able to switch between genres could snap between the expected vocal timbres quickly and smoothly, also using the *cengkok* associated with each genre. Other singers sounded the same for both genres and they always knew it immediately. Yanti Mboel, who specializes only in *kroncong*, laughed after she did her two demonstrations and said, “How come they’re almost the same!”¹³⁹ This is an example of when a singer is unable to meet the timbral expectations for a given genre. Yanti Mboel does not perform *sindhengan* publicly and was only performing it here per my request. Therefore, I have never heard her criticized for not meeting timbral expectations. In this instance, she laughed because she realized she was unable to meet her *own* expectations of timbre for *sindhengan*.

¹³⁷ Rini Rahayu, personal communication, July 15th, 2023.

¹³⁸ Sujiati, personal communication, August 30th, 2021.

¹³⁹ Yanti Mboel, personal communication, June 25th, 2023. [I. “*Kok hampir sama!*”]

4.4 Learning and Enculturation

Vocal education and enculturation varied greatly among the women I interviewed. In this research, my concept of vocal education and enculturation includes formal education such as in a school or private lessons, learning informally with family members or in the community, participation in church choirs, learning how to recite the Qur'an, and participation in music ensembles that play other genres such as pop or *dangdut*. My interlocuters often cited being part of a family of musicians or traditional artists [I. *keluarga seniman*] an important influence on their vocal ability and style. Sunyahni, for instance, came from a family who performed *gamelan* professionally. Sunyahni was born in 1976 to a *kendhang* player and a traditional Javanese dancer.¹⁴⁰ When she was growing up she would follow her older sisters to *gamelan* events, sometimes learning *sindhenan* on stage.¹⁴¹ This level of immersion, where *gamelan* is a part of everyday life, greatly impacted her vocal style and she cites this as the core of her education as a *pesindhen*.

Sri Harjutri, born 1972, described her mixed background of formal education, learning informally with family, leading a church choir, and singing informally with a *kroncong* group in Surakarta.¹⁴² She comes from a family of traditional artists; her father sometimes performed as a *dhalang* and her mother studied *sindhenan*. Sri Harjutri started learning *sindhenan* in SMKI (*Sekolah Menengah Karawitan Indonesia*, Middle School for Karawitan, Indonesia) in Surakarta, a middle school for students who want to focus on Central Javanese *gamelan*, as a teenager. One of her teachers began inviting her to do small gigs which gave her more opportunities to practice

¹⁴⁰ Sunyahni, personal communication, July 5th, 2023.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Sri Harjutri, personal communication, September 1st, 2021.

sindhenan. When she got married in 1992, she moved to Surakarta with her husband and their new neighborhood hosted weekly *kroncong* rehearsals. She started learning the *kroncong* repertoire and the appropriate timbre. Building on many years singing in church, she began leading a church choir in Surakarta in 1996.

Some *kroncong* singers tell me that they learned how to sing through training in *seriosa* or in choirs [I. *paduan suara*] whereas *campur sari* singers sometimes cite training in *gamelan* singing. Sri Harjutri's role in church choirs was part of what she felt prepared her to sing *kroncong* as both types of music use a round, open timbre. Putri Anjarsari, a *pesindhen* who performs regularly with Ki Purbo Asmoro, described how she initially had a difficult time learning the appropriate timbre for *sindhenan*.¹⁴³ Putri Anjarsari is Christian and has participated in church choirs since she was in middle school. She finds that singing *kroncong* uses the same kind of chest voice [I. *suara dada*] that church choir singing does so initially *kroncong* was easier for her.¹⁴⁴ None of the singers I interviewed cited their background in Qur'anic recitation, although several of them did learn to recite the Qur'an, as part of what helped them sing *langgam Jawa*. This is in contrast to what Weintraub observed among *dangdut* singers, wherein singers who transitioned to this genre from *orkes Melayu* cited their training in Qur'anic recitation as impactful in their careers as *dangdut* singers (2010, 50).¹⁴⁵

Putri Anjarsari was partially motivated by hearing foreigners perform *sindhenan*. In middle school, Putri Anjarsari heard Agnes Serfozo, a *pesindhen* from Hungary, and the mix of inspiration and a sense of competition propelled her to study *sindhenan*. She said "This foreigner is learning

¹⁴³ Putri Anjarsari, personal communication, July 23rd, 2023.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ These singers, including Ellya Khadam, Munif Bahasuan, A. Raq, Mansyur S., Elvy Sukaesih, and Rita Sugiarto, explained that this impact came less from specific melodic ornaments and more from training in breath control, phrasing, and diction (Weintraub 2010, 50).

gamelan just like that. I don't want to lose out!"¹⁴⁶ suggesting that she did not want to be outdone by a foreigner. After this she began studying *sindhenan* at SMKI and learning in a community group and she is now performing at a professional level.

Endah Laras had a particularly mixed educational background in *sindhenan* and *seriosa*. She came from a family of traditional Javanese artists and learned *sindhenan* from a young age. Although her early background is in *sindhenan*, when she was in middle school her family moved to Jakarta and she began studying *seriosa* and choral singing. She learned breathing techniques in choral singing, such as breathing from the diaphragm, that she later applied to all of the styles that she performs. Endah Laras said this has really benefitted her; she is not easily fatigued when she performs and if she is sick or has a cough she is able to push through and continue performing.¹⁴⁷ This example indicates that the timbre associated with a particular genre can be produced using a range of techniques. On the other hand, Endah Laras's blended singing style, both in terms of her educational background but also in her application of techniques, might lead to the kind of critique in the beginning on this chapter. To some listeners and to this aforementioned singer, Endah Laras's timbre is perceived as too blended or as falling too much in between genres. These listeners perceive this blend of timbres as a negative attribute, preferring vocal timbres that they understand as clearly a *kroncong* timbre or clearly a *sindhenan* timbre. This negative perception illuminates a border of identity and a boundary that some singers create around their perception of appropriate vocal timbres for given genres.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. [I. "Orang asing belajar gamelan gitu. Saya gak mau kalah!"]

¹⁴⁷ Endah Laras, personal communication, July 15th, 2023. During the filming of "Mengapa Harus Waldjajah?" for *Kick Andy*, Endah Laras was sick. I could hear a change in her voice but she still sounded clear and confident. She later told me that the techniques she learned from choral singing helped her in this situations.

One thing that Endah Laras made clear, however, is that formal pedagogy dealing specifically with breathing techniques tended to be most common in classical singing [I. *seriosa*], mentioned in *kroncong* but mostly taught by imitation, and taught almost exclusively by imitation for *sindhenan*. My other interlocuters described this same pattern. It was also common across my interviews for singers to demonstrate whatever vocal phenomenon we were discussing as opposed to using descriptive words. On the one hand, the singers are recreating a thick event of sound in real time, something far richer than any verbal description could offer. On the other hand, this resonates with what Nina Eidsheim describes, in the context of Western classical singing, as “classical vocal pedagogues’ struggle to connect physiological knowledge with singing pedagogy” (2015, 137). In efforts to describe the physical actions that need to take place to produce an expected timbre, classical voice teachers often fall back on metaphors. Although the singers I interviewed would indeed mention aspects of the material voice such as the throat and diaphragm, they would quickly arrive at an impasse and switch to a vocal demonstration. In these three traditions, Western classical singing, *sindhenan*, and *kroncong*, the means of timbral production remain somewhat mysterious and hard to describe. This is related to the highly subjective nature of timbre that Fales describes, wherein listeners bring their own experiences to bear on sound quality in a way that is distinct from parameters such as amplitude and pitch. In turn, many singers prefer to perform a demonstration as opposed to describe the desired timbre with words.

This tendency is important to note because it also gives us information about how these women vocalists are learning these vocal styles: mostly through demonstration as opposed to description. Many of my interlocuters, particularly *pesindhen* coming from families of artists [I. *keluarga seniman*], described having a mentor or family member sing the next part softly in their ear and they would perform it immediately during the event. Rini Rahayu said, “At first it was

dictated to me. I had to imitate my mother who would whisper in my ear and then I would sing loudly,” referring to the way that she would project the musical passage she had just heard on stage.¹⁴⁸ This was in part to learn the melody and options for *cengkok* of a musical passage, but my interlocutors were also learning timbre in these moments. None of my interlocutors who perform *kroncong* regularly described processes like this. Yet, learning timbre is only a single part of staged performance. The next section details the way that bodily presentation on stage intersects with and impacts vocal timbres among genres and examines the differences between genres in these presentations.

4.5 Performing Timbre

Staged bodily comportment and movement sometimes differs between *kroncong* singers and *pesindhen*, although many of these differentiations have started to soften or blend within the past thirty years. I follow Iris Marion Young in thinking about bodily comportment, like vocal timbre, not as something that is essential and innate but instead as enculturated, as produced through repetition. Bodily comportment that is considered feminine does not arise from an inherent set of qualities associated with being biologically female but instead is “a set of structures and conditions which delimit the typical situation of being a woman in a particular society, as well as the typical way in which this situation is lived by the women themselves” (Young 1980, 140). Young is careful to note that these structures and conditions are not universal and are instead

¹⁴⁸ Rini Rahayu, personal communication, July 15th, 2023. [I. *Awal-awal nya didikte saya harus menirukan ibu saya membisikan saya nanti saya yang bersuara keras.*”]

contingent on time and place. The expected bodily comportment that the singers described is specific to the cultural context of Central Java.¹⁴⁹

Female *kroncong* singers typically stand center stage while performing, rarely moving their hips but often making gentle gestures with their hands or extending their arms. This runs counter to the kneeling position and more narrow bodily comportment historically used by *pesindhen*. In reference to *kroncong* singing, Sri Harjutri remarks “We definitely stand and can follow along in a way that’s fitting with the verses of the song. For instance ‘*Yen Ing Tawang*’: we look up while our hand raises in a way that’s fitting with the poetry of the lyrics.”¹⁵⁰ Historically, *pesindhen* kneel when they perform, usually with the assistance of a small stool called *dhingklik*, and it is considered appropriate for them to remain still, keep their knees together, and keep their arms relatively close to their sides. This aligns with Javanese ideals of refined [I. *alus*] body presentations. Part of the reason for this kneeling position is that it was and still it considered disrespectful to stand next to *gamelan* instruments, to place one’s body higher than the instruments as well as the musicians playing them.¹⁵¹

While this narrow bodily comportment is still evident in classical *gamelan* contexts and *wayang*, since the mid-1990s it has become more common for *pesindhen* to stand, face the

¹⁴⁹ It is worth mentioning, however, that the feminine bodily comportment Young described in 1980 in a Western context was physically quite narrow with limited movement. “Women generally are not as open with their bodies as men in their gait and stride...Though we now wear pants more than we used to, and consequently do not have to restrict our sitting postures because of dress, women still tend to sit with their legs relatively close together and their arms across their bodies” (1980, 142).

¹⁵⁰ Sri Harjutri, personal communication, September 1st, 2021. “*Kita kan berdiri, bisa mengikuti sesuai dengan syair lagu. Misalnya “Yen ing Tawang”: kita lihat ke atas sambil tangannya naik kita atas sesuai dengan syair lirik.*”

¹⁵¹ Somehow I only discovered the extent of this faux pas, that is, standing up next to the *gamelan* instruments, this year. I was at a weekly *gamelan* rehearsal in Surakarta led by Pak Suripto. These rehearsals were typically four hours long and by the third hour my back felt tight and achy. One night I stood up from where I had been sitting and playing *saron*, pausing for a moment and stretching my arms above my head. I noticed some restlessness and murmuring among the people sitting around me. Finally, Pak Ripto said, “Hannah...you can’t do that...” [Hannah...*gak boleh*]. Startled, I asked what he meant and he patiently explained that it was rude to stand next to the instruments because it suggested that I found myself superior to this sacred music ensemble. I sat down immediately.

audience instead of the *dhalang*, use gentle movements, or even gyrate their hips on stage while performing. In the following paragraphs, I connect this shift in performance practices to New Order initiatives that aimed to use *wayang* as a tool for informing and controlling the masses. Performances by *pesindhen* are embedded within the *wayang* and therefore an important aspects of these New Order initiatives. I do not claim that this shift in performance practices happened evenly and in all places throughout Java. Further, the mid-1990s were certainly not the first time that *pesindhen* stood to perform. The following two paragraphs will outline early iterations of *pesindhen* standing or dancing to perform before I return to the mid-1990s.

Andrew Weintraub (2004) describes the way that *pesindhen* [alternatively *sinden*] in West Java in the late 1950s and early 1960s were elevated to platforms onstage in order to be more visible to audiences. Even in this seated position, they were higher and more visible than the *dhalang* and their status and position continued to rise through the early 1960s which Weintraub connects with the chaos of the Guided Democracy years under Sukarno. *Pesindhen* also danced onstage during the late 1950s and 1960s and may have danced earlier. After 1965, *pesindhen* began dancing on stage again, but the meanings of their dancing and the repertoire had changed, becoming controlled spectacle under the New Order. In 1975, comedy troupe Srimulat had their anniversary celebration in Surakarta (Emerson 2022, 99). *Dhalang* and master musician Ki Nartosabdho performed the *wayang* and the troupe invited Waldjinhah, providing her a designated platform where she stood to perform during interludes (Ibid.). Beginning in 1983, *dhalang* Manteb Soedharsono showcased Waldjinhah, also providing her with a platform where she stood and performed (Ibid.).

In villages throughout Central Java, *pesindhen* were slower to stand when they performed and to this day some of my interviewees said they still prefer not to stand when they perform in

wayang. Sri Harjutri, a *pesindhen* who sang with Ki Anom Suroto in the 1990s, marks the mid-1990s as the beginning of this shift in bodily presentation and cites “the yellow [political] party,”¹⁵² an expression for the Golkar party, and the influence of Pak Sujadi, an official for Golkar, on this shift (see Chapter 2 for more about the influence of Pak Sujadi). Sri Harjutri remembers that singers began standing during the mid-1990s but also remembers that she would still often sit facing the *dhalang* at this time, highlighting the unevenness of this shift from sitting to standing. Sri Harjutri also says “For my portion as long as I’ve lived, while I’m performing *sindhenan*, for the portion that I’m performing *sindhenan* I have never stood up.”¹⁵³ If she is “singing” [I. *nyanyi*] she does not mind standing up, for instance, if she is singing *kroncong* or *campur sari*. I was struck that she used the word “singing” for *campur sari* even though the vocal styles and timbre for both *campur sari* and *sindhenan* are so similar. Sri Harjutri explained that in *campur sari* the instruments are often on a stage while the *pesindhen*, or in this case *penyanyi*, are on the ground therefore keeping their bodies below the *gamelan* instruments. Standing during *wayang* would mean placing her body above the *gamelan* which, to this day, she does

While *pesindhen* were standing on stage well before the mid-1990s, my interlocuters marked the development of a stronger trend towards *pesindhen* standing and dancing during this time. Endah Laras estimated that this shift, from sitting to standing, happened around 1996 or 1997.¹⁵⁴ I posit that the development of this trend is related to policies in Central Java during the New Order. Central Javanese governor Ismail, who served between 1983 and 1993, worked with Ganasidi, the Golkar Party’s arts wing, to create a plan to “spectacularize” *wayang* (Emerson 2022,

¹⁵² Sri Harjutri, personal communication, July 14th, 2023. [I. “Partai yang kuning.”]

¹⁵³ Sri Harjutri, personal communication, July 14th, 2023. [I. “Kalau porsi saya nyindhen, selama saya nyindhen, kalau porsi saya nyindhen, saya belum pernah berdiri.”]

¹⁵⁴ Endah Laras, personal communication, July 15th 2023.

97). Harmoko, the minister of information under Suharto, also played a key role in instrumentalizing *wayang* and other art forms to promote Golkar. On the other hand, Harmoko also disparaged certain art forms such as pop songs that he considered “weeepy” because they would drain listeners’ commitment to national development (Yampolsky 1989). New Order politicians perceived *wayang* as a strategic art form in controlling the masses and this was expressed in a phrase that Harmoko coined: “*tontonan, tuntunan, dan tatanan* (attractions to watch, lessons to learn from, and a sense of order to live by)” (Emerson 2022, 98). Sunyahni used this phrase, albeit to describe *campur sari*, during Endahing Budaya Larasing Campursari on June 27th 2023 and *pesindhen* Nur Handyani said she continued to hear the phrase used in the context of *wayang* performances as of 2023.¹⁵⁵

Endah Laras suggested that a funding organization called PANTAP (*Panitia Tetap Apresiasi dan Pengembangan Seni Pedalangan*; Committee for the Appreciation and Development of the Art of Pedalangan) played a significant role in instrumentalizing *wayang* during the New Order.¹⁵⁶ When Central Javanese governor Soewardi took office in 1993 after Ismail, the governor’s office collaborated with other influential figures to create PANTAP (Emerson 2022, 99-100). Representing the Golkar ruling party, PANTAP continued the monthly *wayang* events that had started under the previous governor, but with increased scale and influence (Ibid.).

Sunyahni also remembers this shift from kneeling to standing or moving in Central Javanese *wayang* as she was a frequent guest for PANTAP-sponsored events. Sunyahni commented on the influence of PANTAP on the performance of *pesindhen* at this time and said,

¹⁵⁵ Nur Handyani, personal communication via Whatsapp, August 8th, 2023.

¹⁵⁶ Endah Laras, personal communication, July 15th 2023.

“In these settings the *pesindhen* were asked to stand facing the onlookers, the audience, that really adds to it. It adds interest and also adds to the beauty of the *wayang* itself. In the past, before there was PANTAP, *pesindhen* sat only behind the *dhalang*. It’s dark!”¹⁵⁷ Sunyahni believes that PANTAP’s aim in asking *pesindhen* to stand and dance added increased interest to the *wayang* which, in turn, supported their ability to convey messages to members of the audience. Nurhana’s comments resonated with Sunyahni’s and she said, “So the *pesindhen* stands up, then faces the audience, and interacts directly with the audience and with the *dhalang* while performing comedic banter. It’s the same thing you see now when you can watch current *wayang* performances. The appearance of the *pesindhen* is still arranged in this same way.”¹⁵⁸ Commenting on how typical and widespread this performance practice has become, Sunyahni said, “Dance! Now I always dance! Every time I come on stage I dance. Even though my dance moves are bad,” as she laughs heartily.¹⁵⁹ ¹⁶⁰ Indonesian sociologist Umar Kayam writes, “...New Order influence came to dominate and regulate almost all aspects of *wayang*” (2001, 75) and the standing or dancing bodies of *pesindhen* were part of the “attractions to watch” in *wayang* performances under PANTAP.

What this example shows us is that expectations for bodily comportment are context-specific and continually changing. The same song performed within the same genre, for example “*Yen Ing Tawang*” in a *gamelan* arrangement, might entail expectations that singers kneel in a

¹⁵⁷ Sunyahni, personal communication via Whatsapp, [I. “*Di setting sedemikian rupa untuk pesindhen disuruh berdiri disetting menghadap ke audiens, ke penonton, itu memang menambah. Menambah menarik dan juga menambah keindahan pertunjukkan wayang itu sendiri. Kalau jaman dulu sebelum ada PANTAP kan pesindhen duduk hanya di belakang dhalang. Gelap!*”]

¹⁵⁸ Nurhana, personal communication via Whatsapp, [I/J. “*Jadi sindhen itu berdiri, terus menghadap penonton, terus dia langsung berinteraksi dengan penonton dan dengan dhalang sambil dagelan lah. Seperti yang sekarang ini jenengan saksikan wayang-wayang yang sekarang ini. Jadi terus penampilannya juga mereka itu ditata.*”]

¹⁵⁹ Sunyahni, personal communication, July 5th, 2023. [I/J. “*Joged! Sekarang pun saya joged! Keluar udah joged, walaupun jogednya jelek.*”]

¹⁶⁰ I have witnessed audiences watching Sunyahni’s dance moves during staged performances with rapt attention, so I think when she refers to her dancing as “bad” she is humbly indicating simply that she not formally trained.

narrow position with their mouths relatively closed in a *klenengan* (performance of *gamelan* in a concert-like setting) while during a *wayang*, singers are expected to stand, lift their arms and make rolling gestures, and perhaps even move their hips. In the two situations that I just described, the expectations for vocal timbre may be more or less the same but expectations for bodily comportment and performance vary considerably. Moreover, singers performing with a *campursari* ensemble often stand and dance, although usually *campursari* groups try to arrange things so that the *gamelan* ensemble and musicians are on a small stage while the *pesindhen* perform on the ground in front of the stage, therefore keeping their bodies below the instruments out of respect. There is an observable shift from many, although not all, *pesindhen* standing during *wayang* events starting in the mid-1990s, demonstrating the fluid and mutable nature of expectations surrounding bodily comportment.

There are also genre-specific expectations for how wide the singer, whether male or female, should open their mouth which connects to the words like nasal, round, and full mentioned earlier. I first heard this from my *sindhenan* teacher Rini Rahayu. When she arrived at my home for *sindhenan* lessons, she was always accompanied by her husband. Both of them often fasted until sunset, even outside of the holy month of Ramadhan, and would leave the glasses of water I offered for them until the evening call to prayer known as Maghrib. Rini Rahayu, born in 1967, is from a *keluarga seniman* (artist family) and as she was growing up and performing in *gamelan* events she learned that it is considered rude for *pesindhen* to open their mouths too wide. During our interview she imitated a *seriosa* singer by stretching her mouth wide and singing a few notes with a round tone and a heavy vibrato, even lifting her hand slightly as though she were performing on stage. I asked if this was conveyed to her verbally or by example and she said, “it’s like it was a rule but

it didn't need to be discussed.”¹⁶¹ *Kroncong* singer Yanti Mboel, born in 1971, agreed, noticing that when *pesindhen* perform their mouths are “not as wide as *kroncong* singers’ when they sing.”¹⁶² In this way, the ideal of narrow bodily compartment for *pesindhen* extends to the compartment of the mouth, to an aspect of the vocal apparatus itself.

Singers who are able to switch between genres consider it an asset for their performance careers; they are able to meet a wide range of song requests, fulfilling the timbral expectations of the event host or the person who requested the song. Commenting on the ability to switch vocal timbres Endah Laras said, “When we have that asset [the ability to switch vocal timbres] we have to think that... it’s not easy to sing songs in several genres in the same performance. We still have to prepare ourselves properly.”¹⁶³ Arum Dyah Hapsari describes her ability to switch genres as an advantage, saying “Because we can accept [all kinds of] work, not just in karawitan. The opportunities for jobs are wider and more numerous. Besides that, there’s an assumption that our song repertoire is more complete because it consists of several genres. That way it’s easier for us to adapt with artists from any genre.”¹⁶⁴ Arum Dyah Hapsari leads with the importance of being better able to find jobs, always a challenge for working musicians. The ability to switch between kneeling and singing *wangsalan* during the *lakon* (story section) of a *wayang* and then rising to sing a *kroncong* or pop song center stage for the comedic section of the same event, is a prized skill for singers. In the following section, I will examine performances of timbre in an Indonesian

¹⁶¹ Rini Rahayu, personal communication, July 15th, 2023. [I. “*Itu jadi kaya sudah menjadi peraturan tapi gak perlu dibahas.*”]

¹⁶² Yanti Mboel, personal communication, June 25th, 2023. [I. “*tidak selebar orang kroncong nyanyi.*”]

¹⁶³ Endah Laras, personal communication via Whatsapp, May 10th, 2024. [I. “*Ketika kita punya aset itu juga kita harus berpikir bahwa...tidak mudah menyanyikan lagu dengan berbagai genre dalam satu pertunjukkan. Kita tetap harus mempersiapkan betul.*”]

¹⁶⁴ Arum Dyah Hapsari, personal communication via Whatsapp, May 8th, 2024. [I. “*Krn kita bisa terima kerja bukan hanya karawitan saja. Peluang kerja lebih luas & banyak. Selain itu, ada asumsi bahwa perbendaharaan lagu2 kita lebih lengkap krn terdiri dari beberapa Genre. Dengan begitu kita lebih mudah adaptasi dengan seniman dari Genre manapun.*”]

talk show focused on an aging star of *langgam Jawa* repertoire. I conduct a playback ethnography focusing on two singers whose performances fall outside of timbral expectations based on genre in order to understand how singers respond to vocal timbres that do not fit the standard.

4.6 “Mengapa Harus Waldjinh?”

On December 13th 2022, an episode featuring the life and contributions of singer Waldjinh was filmed for the nationally known talk show *Kick Andy* by Metro TV. Kick Andy is also the nickname of the host for this show, Andy F. Noya. This episode featured a variety of musical acts performing some of Waldjinh’s most popular songs, such as “*Jangkrik Genggong*”¹⁶⁵ (“Cricket”) and “*Tanjung Perak*,” (“Silver Cape,” a sea port in Surabaya, Java) as well as discussions with the host, the musical acts, and Waldjinh herself, regarding her impact and legacy. Two of the performers invited for this show were Endah Laras and Putri Ayu, a young *seriosa* singer from Medan, Sumatra. Putri Ayu’s first performance on the show was of “*Yen Ing Tawang*” with the accompaniment of a *kroncong* band. Her performance sounded convincing as a *kroncong* rendition of the song, but most of the singers I interviewed could tell that she had *seriosa* training just by listening to this performance. During the show, Endah Laras complimented her performance, saying that *langgam Jawa* is difficult to perform, that Putri Ayu had obviously spent some time with the piece, and that she had done well.

Later in the show Putri Ayu was interviewed by the show host, Andy F. Noya, and by Butet Kartaredjasa, an esteemed artist from Yogyakarta. Butet Kartaredjasa made an interesting request,

¹⁶⁵ *Jangkrik genggong* is a very specific type of cricket. This cricket is brownish black with a band on its upper wings.

asking Putri Ayu to perform a phrase from “*Yen Ing Tawang*” again but this time in a *seriosa* style. Putri Ayu met his request and sang the phrase unaccompanied, folding her arms gently across her body and preparing her breath as shown in Figure 7. I exchanged a look of surprise with one of the musicians on stage, a friend of mine whom I have known for several years. We both raised our eyebrows, disoriented by the combination of an open *seriosa* timbre with a *langgam Jawa* song. When I write *seriosa* timbre I am referring to sound produced by a wide-open mouth, a sound that many of my interlocuters describe as “round” [I. *bulat*] and a relatively fast vibrato. A few minutes later Kick Andy asked Endah Laras, as an expert in *langgam Jawa kroncong*, to perform some of the most difficult *cengkok* she could. Endah Laras chose “*Yen Ing Tawang*” for continuity, performing just a short phrase without accompaniment from the band. Raising her eyebrows and tilting her head coquettishly, she effortlessly glided through subtle melismas as show in Figure 8. The clarity of her timbre and her articulation are aligned with *sindhenan* but her vibrato is fairly fast and her timbre is more round [I. *bulat*] than many *pesindhen* in Central Java. I posit that this somewhat hybrid timbre is a result of her blended training in *sindhenan* and Western art singing.



Figure 18: Putri Ayu performing an unaccompanied excerpt of “*Yen Ing Tawang*” in a *seriosa* style.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K14bDnRl0gs&t=2085s>.

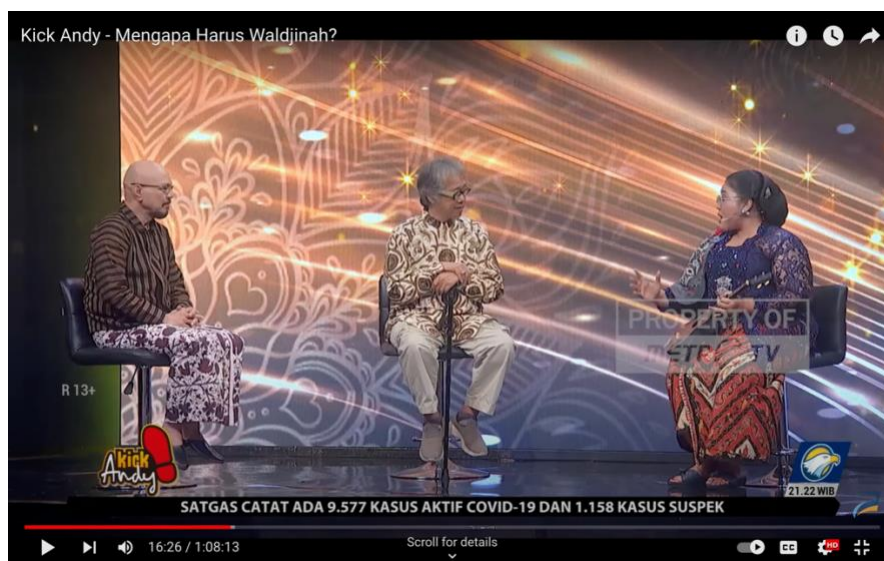


Figure 19: From left Kick Andy, Butet Kartaredjasa, and Endah Laras during an interview portion of the show. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kl4bDnRI0gs&t=2085s>.

During my interviews, I conducted a playback ethnography. I played each of these clips, first the clip of Putri Ayu singing “*Yen Ing Tawang*” unaccompanied in a *seriosa* style and then Endah Laras singing the same phrase unaccompanied in a *langgam Jawa kroncong* style, without showing my interlocuter who was singing. I would play each clip individually, asking what kind of singer this might be, where they might be from, and what kind of musical training they might have undergone. Only after I had played both clips and recorded their responses did I reveal who the singers were.

When I played the clip of Putri Ayu, I was surprised when five of my interlocuters guessed that I was the one singing! The interlocuters who said this had all heard me sing several times. When I asked why they thought it was me, some of them referred to the pronunciation of the Javanese words sounding a bit odd and overly precise while others commented on the timbre, saying that my vocal timbre sounds a bit like *seriosa*. Even my interlocuters who did not guess

that this was a clip of me singing guessed that the singer was Western and perhaps trained in *seriosa* or Western art song. I am not formally trained in Western art song but I did participate in choral singing for decades. Apparently, despite my best efforts to learn the appropriate timbre for *langgam Jawa kroncong* and *sindhengan*, I still bring my Western choral background with me when I sing: the “round” sound and a relatively fast vibrato. This example also demonstrates the way that the singers I interviewed associate a round, open vocal timbre with the West.

When I played the clip of Endah Laras, most of my interlocutors recognized her voice immediately. I asked how they could tell and most of them said they recognized her vocal timbre. They recognized the hybrid sound that I described: a relatively fast vibrato and round sound, but not as round as *seriosa* singer. I asked about her pronunciation and they all said she sounded like a native Javanese speaker (which, of course, she is) and that the way she elided words sounded natural.

I include this example for two reasons. The first is that it supports Nina Eidsheim’s idea that the voice is not stable and not able to yield precise answers about a person’s skin color. Even though my playback of the clip was imprecise and some dialogue in lightning fast Indonesian was audible before the unaccompanied singing, several listeners still mistook the voice of a 26-year-old Indonesian woman for a 34-year-old white woman from the United States.¹⁶⁶ Through this example we can see how the open, round timbre and fast vibrato of *seriosa*, although associated with the West, is something that is enculturated and is learned as opposed to essential and innate.

The second reason that this example is useful is that it shows us what the appropriate timbre for *langgam Jawa kroncong* is *not*. In this way, I am better able to circumscribe that the appropriate timbre for *langgam Jawa kroncong* is *not* open or round and it does not use a fast vibrato. Although

¹⁶⁶ Ages recorded during the interviews.

Endah Laras complimented Putri Ayu's performance of "*Yen Ing Tawang*" during the show, noticing how she had dedicated herself to learning the appropriate *cengkok*, my interlocutors still felt that her vocal timbre still sounded like *seriosa*. A lifetime of learning *seriosa* in Putri Ayu's case, and a lifetime of choir singing in my case, could not be undone quickly. The reiteration of an open, round timbre and fast vibrato, the vocal regulation that we had both experienced when learning how to sing, are still audible in our vocal performances.

4.7 Conclusion

Women singers in Central Java describe distinct timbral differences between the way that *langgam Jawa* is sung in the contexts of *kroncong* and *gamelan* respectively. The singers I interviewed learned how to produce these timbres through a combination of formal and informal training, religious vocal training, and participation in local groups who play various genres of music. Some interviewees did not learn certain timbres, almost always due to a lack of exposure to a certain timbre and lack of opportunity to practice it. Timbre is embedded in performance practice and the staged embodiment associated with certain genres is fluid and evolves over time. Using an excerpt from *Kick Andy*, I investigated the way that timbre is learned and enculturated, connecting back to the way that the women I interviewed described their own education processes.

Singers associated diatonic forms of *kroncong* with pan-Indonesian pride. The women that I interviewed often find similarities between the vibrato used in *kroncong* and *seriosa*, harkening back to the 1950s and 1960s when Indonesia was entering the world stage as an independent nation. The vibrato and timbre for diatonic forms of *kroncong* currently being performed still retain

similarities with the vibrato and timbre used by singers in recordings in the 1950s and 1960s. The women I interviewed who feel comfortable producing a *kroncong* timbre and perform it regularly often had experience in choirs, whether in church or elsewhere, including Putri Anjarsari, Endah Laras, Yanti Mboel, Sri Harjutri, and Sujati. Indriyati and Arum Dyah Hapsari were exceptions. Indriyati's father was a *kroncong* musician and she grew up listening to and practicing in his *latihan*. Arum Dyah Hapsari was a self-described autodidact [I. *otodidak*].

Meanwhile, *pesindhen* who perform with *gamelan* ensembles as well as those who perform with *campursari* groups present vibrato that singers associate with Central Java. These singers either grew up in *keluarga seniman* or attending schooling for *sindhenan*, whether SMKI or ISI Surakarta. The more important factor seemed to be growing up in *keluarga seniman*, as Arum Dyah Hapsari, Sunyahni, Nurhana, Endah Laras, Rini Rahayu, Eka Suranti, and Sri Harjutri all grew up in this kind of environment. Several of these women, Rini Rahayu for example, talked about learning from family members on stage during performances. Spending so much time with *gamelan* musicians was critical to their education.

This chapter provides a case study in examining that voice is not innate but, instead, cultural. Referring to Iris Marion Young's work, Nina Eidsheim writes, "Akin to the ways we are habituated to dress, walk or throw a ball "like a girl," each vocal engagement is connected to a collective practice that depends on habituated micro-vocal maneuvers" (2019, 41). Steven Feld writes that voices are "material embodiments of social ideology and experience" (Feld et al. 2004, 332), resonating with the stories of the women in this chapter. Each of the singers in the chapter grew up in a different context and had distinct musical experiences throughout their lives and their voices reflect these experiences. For some of the women, this meant that they were most comfortable only in one genre whereas others thrived in situations that demanded switching vocal

timbres. Singers like Sujiati, Sri Harjutri, Endah Laras, Putri Anjarsari, and Arum Dyah Hapsari who switch between singing *gamelan*, *campur sari*, and *kroncong* actively navigate between multiple ways of being in the world through voice. These singers bridge multiple identities through their singing and manifest an in-betweenness when they vocalize, in this case crossing the borders between what is sonically Javanese and what is deemed to be sonically Indonesian or international. They are singing in the interstitial spaces of 21st century identity (Meizel 2020). They cite the value of this switching mainly in terms of performance opportunities: the more genres one is able to switch among, the more performance opportunities will be available to the singer. Further, as Endah Laras explains, being able to switch genres allows the singer to adjust to the accompanying ensemble. When performing with a *gamelan*, the singer is more balanced with the instrumentalists while during performances with a *kroncong* ensemble, the singer can be highlighted in front of the rest of the group.

Langgam Jawa kroncong is associated with both national and Javanese identities as it blends elements of both *gamelan* and *kroncong*. For Surakarta-based singer Sujiati, “*Langgam Jawa* has a Javanese identity. However, because we present *langgam Jawa* with the packaging of instruments of the genre *kroncong*, it can be nationalized because *kroncong* versions of *langgam Jawa* can be received in a national way.”¹⁶⁷ As a blending of both *gamelan* and *kroncong* genres, *langgam Jawa kroncong*, women singers present themselves in a manner that is legible as “Javanese” within the context of Indonesian national identity. In the decades following independence, this hybrid presentation would have also been apparent in staged bodily comportment. Singers like Waldjinhah stood center stage and made graceful gestures while singing

¹⁶⁷ Sujiati, personal communication, August 30th, 2021. [I. “*Langgam Jawa* itukan identitas Jawa, ciri khas Jawa. Namun karena kemasanya kita penyajiannya melalui alat musik yang bergenre *kroncong* itu bisa menasional karena *langgam Jawa* diversikan *kroncong* juga bisa diterima secara nasional.”]

langgam Jawa with *kroncong* ensembles, a bodily presentation that would have been unheard of in *gamelan* contexts at the time. Waldjajah's performances on platforms in *wayang* with *dhalang* Manteb Soedharsono starting in 1983, are one example of an early evolution of practices in staged bodily comportment. Since the mid-1990s, a common practice began wherein *pesindhen* stand and dance while they sing in comedic interludes during *wayang*. Therefore, the practice of standing and moving while singing is no longer specific to *kroncong*. The singing style and timbre of *langgam Jawa kroncong* manifests a middle ground between the genres of *gamelan* and *kroncong*. The use of a round, open vocal timbre and full vibrato incorporate elements of *kroncong*, while the use of pentatonic tuning systems and Javanese language embrace aspects of *gamelan*.

Part of the way that *langgam Jawa* began to be treated as a repertoire as opposed to a genre was in the distinct vocal timbres that women singers produced particularly to distinguish between *kroncong* and *campur sari*. Instead of *langgam Jawa* possessing a single complex of identities as a genre in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the repertoire began to move among several genre cultures, shifting identities depending on the context. The repertoire of *langgam Jawa* in the context of *kroncong*, using a vocal timbre that draws on both pan-Indonesian and international timbral expectations, acts as a sonic bridge between these Javanese and pan-Indonesian identities. *Langgam Jawa kroncong* was a way to sonically bridge *gamelan* and *kroncong*. The set of values reflected in listening to *langgam Jawa* and discerning what the desired timbre is for each genre is a work of preservation in some contexts and a work of nostalgia in others. The *seriosa*-tinged timbre used in *langgam Jawa kroncong* sounds back to the decades of the new nation, a nostalgia for the moment of potential as Indonesia took form and became self-governing. Meanwhile the *sindhenan* timbre used in *gamelan* and *campursari* is an act of preservation precisely because it is

not differentiated. The same vocal timbre used in classical *gamelan* is preserved in the distinct instrumental packaging of *campursari*, preserving a tradition of vocal timbre.

5.0 ICONS OF LANGGAM JAWA AND AGING VOICES

This chapter will focus on performances by Waldjinhah, Nurhana, and Sunyahni to examine distinct ways that the staged performances of aging female *langgam Jawa* singers are a potent site for invoking nostalgic meanings among Javanese musicians and listeners. Many Indonesians closely associate Waldjinhah (b. 1945-) with *langgam Jawa*, particularly in *kroncong* settings (Skelchy 2015, 6). Although Waldjinhah also performed *campur sari* settings of *langgam Jawa* later in her career, Nurhana (b. 1978-) and Sunyahni (b. 1976-) are better known for their performances of *campur sari*. Nurhana and Sunyahni are one generation younger than Waldjinhah and each woman has navigated aging, of both the body and the voice, in a unique way.



Figure 20: The cover for a release from Dasa Studio entitled 3 Ratu Langgam Sejagat Vol. 1 (3 Queens of Universal Langgam Vol. 1)(1996) featuring images of Waldjinhah, Nurhana, and Sunyahni juxtaposed with kroncong and gamelan instruments.

These three women are connected through their performances of *langgam Jawa* across genres. In 1996, Dasa Studio released two volumes of compilations of recordings from Waldjinah, Nurhana, and Sunyahni which were overwhelmingly *langgam Jawa* songs. Figure 1 shows the cover for *3 Ratu Langgam Sejagat Vol. 1 (3 Queens of Universal Langgam Vol. 1)* with images of Waldjinah, Nurhana, and Sunyahni juxtaposed with *kroncong* and *gamelan* instruments. On this album, 17 of the 20 tracks are *langgam Jawa* recordings. Of the remaining three tracks, one is an Indonesian language *langgam kroncong* recording and the other two are *pop Jawa* recordings using Javanese language. Waldjinah was known for *kroncong* particularly in her early career and Nurhana's recording of a *langgam kroncong* song entitled "*Mawar Biru*" ("Blue Rose") appears on this album, but most of the tracks use a *campur sari* ensemble for accompaniment. These two compilation albums demonstrate how strongly associated these three women are in *langgam Jawa*, so much so that Dasa Studios has crowned them "queens." This chapter will provide an overview of existing literature about aging women in popular music followed by case studies examining the performances of Waldjinah, Nurhana, and Sunyahni as they navigate both the affordances and challenges of aging.

5.1 *Langgam Jawa* and Aging Women in Popular Music

As the popularity of *kroncong* and *campursari*, declined, in some ways so did the careers of these three singers. All three women were still performing as of my fieldwork in 2022-2023, but they have had to carefully navigate the shifting attention of audiences to other genres such as *dangdut* and to manage their public personas as their voices and bodies inevitably age. Popular

music has long been associated with youth culture. As more musicians continue their careers well into their 70s, it is evident that boundaries are shifting and the association between youth culture and popular music is being called into question (Whiteley 2005). Rock bands like The Rolling Stones continued to tour in their 70s (Zobenica 2007) and salsa diva Celia Cruz performed in her 80s (Poey 2012).

This chapter builds on growing research focusing on aging and popular music (Bennett 2006, Bennett and Taylor 2012, Forman and Fairley 2012, Jennings and Gardner 2012, Twigg and Martin 2015). There is substantial research examining the star personas of divas and their performance strategies (Danielson 1997, Burns and Lafrance 2002, Doty 2008, Skelchy 2015, Weintraub & Barendregt 2017). Only a few studies, however, have used age as a theoretical tool in studies of performance (Whiteley 2005, Elliott 2015) or more specifically in studies of female performers (Jennings & Gardner 2012).

I follow a growing number of scholars in conceiving of age, like race and gender, as something constructed as opposed to fixed and natural (Laz 1998, Gullette 2004, Twigg & Martin 2015). The meanings of age are not fixed because they are part of larger signifying practices. The approach to biological aging as a cultural construction is what distinguishes aging studies from gerontology which is mainly focused on biology. Margaret Gullette notes the impact of culture on negative perceptions of aging writing that, “we are aged more by culture than by chromosomes” (2004, 101). “Age *is* an act, a performance in the sense of something requiring activity and labor, and age is normative” (Laz 1998, 86, emphasis in original). Research suggests that, rather than an East-West contrast in perceptions of aging, socioeconomic factors and more granularly located cultural beliefs have a bigger impact in positive and negative perceptions of aging (Lockenhoff et al. 2009). In this way, age can be viewed as a mutable, socially constructed performance in the

same way as gender. This definition, however, does not exclude the impact of biological changes that occur as a result of aging. Biology does not dictate the way that age is performed, but it does set limits on its performance.

While performers of any gender will need to negotiate aging should they continue to perform, women face gender-specific challenges. “For female pop stars, whose star bodies and star performances are undisputedly the objects of a sexualized eternal gaze, the process of publicly aging poses particular challenges” (Jennings 2012, 35). “Women’s social positioning as “to be gazed at” may make ageing especially traumatic in relation to the sheer external changes in the human body” (Kaplan 1999, 174). Kaplan draws on Laura Mulvey’s (1999) theorization of the male gaze. This theory examines the way that the pleasure of looking is divided between active/male and passive/female in a world where power between genders is imbalanced. In particular, women whose early careers are deeply linked with the ways their bodies look often struggle to continue their careers and negotiate audience expectations. Meanwhile, women whose careers are more based on their talent or their artistic concepts are sometimes better able to maintain their careers as their bodies age. Further, nostalgia can open opportunities for aging women performers to take on new roles such as “national treasure” or “cultural icon” (Jennings & Gardner 2012, 3).

Besides the changes that the overall body goes through with age, voices are also subject to biological change. Voices are central to the consumption of popular music. Simon Frith writes, “the meaning of pop is the meaning of pop stars, performers with bodies and personalities; central to the pleasure of pop is pleasure in a voice, sound as body, sound as person” (2002, 210). Audiences deeply associate the sound of Waldjannah, Nurhana, and Sunyahni’s voices with their bodies and stage personas. At the time of my research, Nurhana and Sunyahni’s vocal quality was

similar to that of the peak of their careers in the mid-1990s and early 2000s. Waldjinhah's voice has changed due to health issues and biological age.

Many listeners in Central Java associate *langgam Jawa* with nostalgia [I. *nostalgia*], a sense of missing someone or something [I. *rindu*], or a sense of longing [J/I. *kangen*]. There is an overall association with *langgam Jawa* repertoire and a sense of longing, but often listeners have specific songs that invoke nostalgic meanings more than others. *Pesindhen* Nurhandayani (b. 1985-) specifically associates “*Caping Gunung*” with “a past time.”¹⁶⁸ I have also heard several taxi drivers, musicians, and listeners in Surakarta use this either same phrase or “earlier times” [I. *jaman dulu*] to describe what they think of when they hear “*Caping Gunung*” or they sometimes say that it “gives them a sense of longing” [I. “*bikin kangen*”]. Nurhana said that “*Yen Ing Tawang*” often makes listeners in Central Java feel a sense of longing.

In Indonesia, respect for the elderly and a sense of filial obligations are strong which can be attributed to a combination of cultural norms as well as religious beliefs (Rahmaniah 2019, 15). Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of family and taking care of family members. Further, people in many parts of Indonesia practiced ancestor worship before the spread of Islam in Indonesia. Some people still practice it today or practice a syncretism of Islam and pre-Islamic beliefs. Cultural norms, however, are changing as the socioeconomic landscape of Indonesia changes and more women continue to enter the workforce. A 2009 study comparing perceptions of aging across 26 cultures noted that educational enrollment and overall population aging (an increased percentage of older adults in comparison to young adults within the population) are actually more important than socioeconomic factors in perceptions of aging (Löckenhoff et al.,

¹⁶⁸ Nurhandayani, personal communication, October 15th, 2022. [I. “*masa yang lalu*”].

950). Indonesia was not part of this study, but the results point towards possible reasons towards changing attitudes towards the elderly. In Indonesia, where increasingly more people are able to pursue higher education and where population growth has slowed since the Two Children Are Enough [I. *Dua Anak Cukup*] initiative, these factors impact changing perceptions towards older adults. The following two sections examine the distinct ways that Waldjinhah, Nurhana, and Sunyahni navigate their changing bodies and voices in the context of popular music.

5.2 Waldjinhah

At the time of my fieldwork in 2022-2023, she was still regularly performing on stage. Counting from the time of her first public performance in 1958, this adds up to 65 years of public performance, albeit with breaks while she was having children and for some health issues later in life. In the early decades of her career, she was known for her high-pitched, coquettish singing (Skelchy 2015, 82). Waldjinhah is known by her fans as a proud mother of five. In fact, she gave birth to all five children before her career had fully developed, remarkable for a female vocalist at that time (Skelchy 2017, 291). Many articles released in the late 60s noted her “comeback” in her late twenties after she suspended her performances to start a family (ibid.). Waldjinhah was known not only as a mother but as a wife. Her first marriage was to her teenage sweetheart, Pak Bud, who later acted as her manager and passed away in 1985 due to complications with diabetes. Waldjinhah met Pak Didit, who became her second husband, four years later. For the four years in between marriages, some fans began referring to her as *janda kwaci* which refers to an attractive, widowed woman (Skelchy 2017, 294). Although in many ways she presented a traditional image as a mother and wife, the reality of her career meant that she spent long periods away from her children while

she performed, running counter to ideals of obedient, loyal Javanese women at the time. Some media sources cast her as a “sex bomb” (Skelchy 2017, 288). One tabloid from the 70s ran the headline, “Is it true that Waldjinhah is an out-of-wedlock pregnant widow?” and another with the caption “If the beautiful *Walang Kekek* (“Grasshopper”) is already working behind the camera, will the producers or directors be brave enough to expose her in SEX scenes?” (Ibid.). Although Waldjinhah still receives attention from media outlets, the topics are now more focused on her legacy than on her sex life.

On stage, she has always appeared in *kain* and *kebaya* which is still the choice of many *kroncong* singers even today. Besides being considered polite [I. *sopan*] dress for *kroncong* performances, the *batik* used for *kain* is also meaningful within Waldjinhah’s family. One of the earliest ways she learned how to sing was from listening to her father sing *macapat* while stamping *batik* cloth.¹⁶⁹ Later on her second brother taught her *kroncong* singing specifically.¹⁷⁰ Now, Waldjinhah’s daughter-in-law Ester Wulandari has a company called Batik Walangkekek named after Waldjinhah’s well-known song “*Walang Kekek*.”¹⁷¹

Many fans and fellow musicians continue to deeply associate Waldjinhah with *kain* and *kebaya*, as evidenced by the following anecdote from Metro TV show, *Kick Andy*. On January 1st, 2023, *Kick Andy* aired an episode called “*Mengapa Harus Waldjinhah?*” which focused specifically on the life and contributions of Waldjinhah. I was present in the audience for the filming of this episode on December 13th, 2022 (see Figure X) and have been able to revisit the episode on Youtube for further analysis. Endah Laras’s niece, Woro Mustiko (b. 2002-) did a solo performance of “*Walang Kekek*” and then a duet of “*Rujak Uleg*” (“Indonesian Traditional Fruit

¹⁶⁹ Waldjinhah, personal communication, May 4th, 2018.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ <https://www.karyakreatifindonesia.co.id/en/umkm/batik-walangekek>.

Salad”) with Endah Laras. Woro Mustiko has performed as a *dhalang* and as a *kroncong* singer from a young age. When this episode was filmed she was 20 years old and Kick Andy noted her age during their interview when he asked, “Now what do you admire, as a member of the young generation of *kroncong* singers, about the living legend Waldjinh?”¹⁷²

Wow, there are so many things that I admire about Eyang Waldjinh, Om. Ah... besides the way that she is very consistent in pursuing *kroncong* music, I also admire her behavior, the way she’s always so beautiful, always so nice to people and how would you say it really really ah... Waldjinh, in my opinion is really consist in campaigning for, in an indirect way, campaigning for being proud of Indonesian culture. In particular, the way that she, since a long time ago, has always worn *gelungan*,¹⁷³ has worn *kebaya*, has worn *kain*. And in my opinion it’s so cool you know, as... what would you say, the identity of Indonesian women, like that, which has been somewhat sidelined, it’s like that.¹⁷⁴

Woro Mustiko never mentions Waldjinh’s voice. Instead, Woro Mustiko focused on her physical appearance, particularly in the way that she dresses and her dedication to promoting Indonesian music and culture. I interpret this as an indication that Waldjinh has moved to the status of “national treasure” or “cultural icon” described by Jennings & Gardner. In this way, Waldjinh is treated as a symbol of Javanese culture in the way that she wears *kebaya* and *sanggul* and this is highlighted over both her past and present vocal performances.

¹⁷² METRO TV. “Mengapa Harus Waldjinh?” January 1, 2023. 1:08:13:50. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kl4bDnRl0gs&t=2086s>. [I. “Sekarang apa yang kamu kagumi sebagai generasi mudah penyanyi *kroncong* terhadap legenda hidup Waldjinh?”]

¹⁷³ *Gelungan* is a bun hairstyle worn by women in Indonesia. *Sanggul* refers to the

¹⁷⁴ METRO TV. “Mengapa Harus Waldjinh?” January 1, 2023. 1:08:13:50. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kl4bDnRl0gs&t=2086s>. [I/J. “Waduh kalau yang saya kagumi sama eyang Waldjinh banyak sekali ya Om. Ah selain eyang sangat konsisten menekuni musik *kroncong*, terus juga bagaimana behaviornya eyang, yang selalu cantik, selalu nice sama orang dan apa namanya bener bener ah ...eyang itu menurut saya sangat konsisten memkampanyekan, secara tidak langsung, memkampanyekan bahwa harus bangga sama kebudayaan Indonesia. Khususnya, cara berpakaianya dari dulu eyang selalu pakai *gelungan*, pakai *kebaya*, pakai *kain*. Dan itu menurut saya keren banget sih sebagai apa ya identitas wanita Indonesia gitu ya yang sudah agak agak disampingkan gitu.” In this quote, I included pauses and hesitations to more closely align with not just what Woro Mustiko was saying but also the way that she said it.

In this same *Kick Andy* episode, the host Andy F. Noya turned to guest Butet Kartaredjasa and invited him to answer the question posed by the title of the episode. Butet Kartaredjasa answered “Yes because today, if we talk about a woman, a woman who has extraordinary strength, who has contributed to this country and that person is still alive, still active, there are very few! One of them is this woman right here.”¹⁷⁵As he finishes his statement



Figure 21: The author (left) and Waldjinah (right) with the logo for Kick Andy and the show title “Mengapa Harus Waldjinah?” behind us on the screen. Photo by Bambang Heri and used with permission.

¹⁷⁵ METRO TV. “Mengapa Harus Waldjinah?” January 1, 2023. 1:08:13:50. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kl4bDnR10gs&t=2086s>. [I. “Ya karena hari ini, kalau kita bicara tentang perempuan, perempuan yang mempunyai kekuatan yang luar biasa, yang memberikan kontribusi untuk negri ini dan orangnya masih hidup, masih bernyawa, sangat sedikit! Salah satunya ya beliau ini.”]

he opens his hand towards Waldjinah, the camera pans to her face as she smiles and the audience applauds. In his statement, Kartaredjasa hailed both Waldjinah's age and her gender as reasons that she might be celebrated with a special episode. In saying that she is "still alive" in two different ways [I. *masih hidup, bernyawa*] he underscores her advanced age. He notes her contributions to Indonesia and also comments that she is still living, suggesting that perhaps others who have made such substantial contributions may have already passed away. Butet Kartaredjasa also uses the word "woman" [I. *perempuan*] twice, emphasizing her gender. Instead of simply being "a person who has extraordinary strength" she is described as "a woman who has extraordinary strength," therefore comparing her career and achievements to those who belong to the category of "women" instead of simply "people" or "Indonesian citizens."

Over time, she has had to adjust to the changing biological parameters of her aging voice. Before she began regularly lip-syncing during performances around 2018, Waldjinah often avoided the *langgam Jawa* repertoire, instead opting for other repertoire such as *kroncong asli*, that she was famous for because it demanded a high vocal register which became difficult for her between the natural processes of aging and the two strokes that she experienced in 2010 and 2012 (Skelchy 2015, 96). *Kroncong asli* repertoire is often less strenuous because it uses a lower register or what some vocalists refer to as a chest voice [I. *suara dada*].¹⁷⁶ *Langgam Jawa* songs are generally higher in pitch and demand even more breath support from the singer. In an interview with Russ Skelchy in 2015, Waldjinah said, "...now my voice has become lower and that's just how it is. If I perform nowadays, I usually sing *keroncong asli*, I'm wouldn't dare sing with the *gamelan* anymore. If I sing with the *gamelan* I have to be able to sing in [the key of] B flat, and I

¹⁷⁶ Putri Anjarsari, personal communication, July 23, 2023.

know I can't do that anymore, my voice is too low. If it becomes more hoarse or gets any lower, I might be better off not singing anymore...I'll just be silent."

For clarification, when Waldjinhah said "B flat" she meant that this would be the diatonic equivalent of the tonic for a *langgam Jawa* song performed with a *gamelan*.¹⁷⁷ Skelchy's insertion of the bracketed words "[the key of]" is not quite accurate as *gamelan* does not use keys but instead uses modes or *pathet*. B flat would be the tone 6 in the *pathet* of *pelog nem*. Skelchy explains that when she says "*gamelan*" she's not only referring to the literal ensemble but to *langgam Jawa* repertoire in general, although *langgam Jawa kroncong* typically uses the key of G for *langgam Jawa* repertoire as opposed to B flat. If one sang "*Yen Ing Tawang*" with a *gamelan* they would need to be able to sing very high in pitch. "*Yen Ing Tawang*" with a *kroncong* ensemble would require a high range but not as high as with *gamelan*. Meanwhile a *kroncong asli* song would require a lower range than both of the preceding scenarios.

In 2018, I planned a tour through Java with a group, Rumput, that I co-founded with Andy McGraw. I was coordinating with a woman named Otty who runs a resort called Balemong in Ungaran, Java. Otty wanted to invite Waldjinhah to perform for the event as well and she asked for me to accompany her to visit Waldjinhah. We went to Waldjinhah's home on June 9th, 2018 and Waldjinhah's son was there as well. Using the most respectful high Javanese, Otty told Waldjinhah what an honor it would be to have her perform in Balemong. Waldjinhah at first made excuses about her health and her teeth, saying that it would be hard for her to sing. Otty said that she could be "just a symbol" [I. "*symbol saja*"] and without further comment, without a spoken confirmation, the conversation shifted to plans and arrangements for bringing Waldjinhah to perform in Balemong. Waldjinhah did sing for this performance, but Otty's comment that she would be "just a

¹⁷⁷ *Gamelan* theorization does not employ the concept of a tonic in the way that Western music does.

symbol” emphasizes the fact that Waldjinah’s voice is not the main reason for Otty’s fervent invitation. As she has aged, Waldjinah has accrued even more respect and admiration.

Since 2018 Waldjinah usually is, in fact, silent during performances. Audiences hear earlier recordings of her disembodied voice while she lip-syncs from her wheelchair during staged performances. On July 22nd, 2024 Waldjinah performed with Orkes Kroncong Alunan Semut Ireng (J/I “Flowing Melody of Black Ants Kroncong Orchestra”)¹⁷⁸ for the annual Solo Keroncong Festival, an event that brings thousands of spectators every year ranging in age for early 20s into 70s and 80s. Young people in Surakarta still appreciate and admire Waldjinah. Figure X, for instance, shows young people examining a Waldjinah album, *Kembang Kacang*, that they had just purchased at the renovated Lokananta studio in Surakarta.

¹⁷⁸ One of my language teachers, Sarjono, suggested that “black ants” [I/J. *semut ireng*] refers a popular *macapat* in the form of *dhandhanggula* popularly called “Semut Ireng.” In this *macapat*, “black ants” refers to the *rakyat*. Sarjono, personal communication via Whatsapp, July 17th, 2024.



Figure 22: Young people examining a Waldjinh's album Kembang Kacang that they just purchased at the renovated Lokananta studio. Photo by the author.



Figure 23: Waldjinh sings “Walang Kekek” with Orkes Keroncong Alunan Semut Ireng accompanying her.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwcRL5_b2m4.

For her performance at the Solo Keroncong Festival 2023, Waldjinh was wheeled out onto the stage by her assistants while she waved to the audience. Waldjinh was wearing a red velvet *kebaya*, *sanggul*, and impeccably applied makeup (Figure X). During her performance I turned to another *penyanyi kroncong* sitting next to me and observed, “She’s lip-syncing.” The singer seemed puzzled and said “No, I don’t think so.” Then she watched a little more closely and nodded saying, “Ah you’re right she is lip-syncing.” I was surprised that she had not noticed immediately particularly as she herself is a *penyanyi*. I wonder if it was because she did not *want* to see the lip-syncing. After her performance, the MC referred to Waldjinh as a “living legend of *kroncong* music” [I. “*legenda hidup musik kroncong*”]. This *penyanyi* wanted to preserve the memory of Waldjinh in her mind before age changed the voice of the “living legend.” If there was any doubt that she was lip-syncing, an uncanny moment happened in the last verse of the song wherein a

child's voice suddenly replaced Waldjinah's adult voice. Eventually the singing child entered the stage and crouched next to Waldjinah, but for a moment Waldjinah is continued to lip-sync along to a child's voice whom the audience cannot yet see.



Figure 24: An unidentified child (left) sings to Waldjinah (right) at the Solo Keroncong Festival in 2023.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwcRL5_b2m4

5.3 Nurhana and Sunyahni

Nurhana and Sunyahni were featured performers in an event called Endahing Budaya Larasing Campursari held at Taman Budaya Solo (Solo Cultural Park) on June 27th, 2023. This

event was spearheaded by Endah Laras whose early career, like Nurhana and Sunyahni, was based in *campur sari*. By the time the performance began, the space was full of spectators ranging in age from 20s to 60s with an even mix of men and women. The event also featured a well-known male *campur sari* singer named Cak Diqin. The singers were accompanied by Sangga Buana and an orchestra called Belkestra which is run by Endah Laras. In this section I will offer background information about Nurhana and Sunyahni, followed by an analysis of their performances during this event with a focus on their distinct navigations of age and gender.

Nurhana Sri Wiryanti was born in Boyolali, Java in 1978 and grew up mostly in Klaten, Java. Nurhana's mother was a *pesindhen* and her father was a *dhalang*. She was the seventh of her father's children. Nurhana laughed heartily as she told me this, saying that *dhalang* usually have several wives.¹⁷⁹ Nurhana grew up around *gamelan* and learned *sindhenan* from a young age. The first *macapat* she learned was from her mother.¹⁸⁰ Nurhana also had some formal training in *gamelan* when she attended SMKI although *sindhenan* was not specifically taught there. When she was in elementary school her mother pushed her to sing in a *kroncong* competition and she sang "*Bunga Anggrek*" ("Orchid").¹⁸¹ In Klaten one of her teachers, Darno, also had a band for kids that played mostly pop songs and *dangdut*, and Nurhana had an opportunity to try singing these genres.¹⁸² From an early age, Nurhana developed the adaptability that was essential to building a thriving career as a *pesindhen* from 1990s onward, pointed out by Mrázek (2005, 409-410) and described by *dhalang* Ki Purbo Asmoro in Chapter 4. In addition to performances of

¹⁷⁹ Nurhana Sri Wiryanti, personal communication, November 11th, 2022.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

langgam Jawa with *campur sari* accompaniment and *kroncong* songs, Nurhana also performed a type of theater called *kethoprak* with her then-husband Ki Joko Edan (Mrázek 2005, 527).

Nurhana is admired not just by her fans but also by other *pesindhen*. Eka Suranti (b. 1987-) described Nurhana as her “idol” [I. *idola*]. She said:

Yes it’s true I idolize her. Because when she sings her voice can make the heart vibrate, it’s melodious, it’s melodious when she sings, she doesn’t look sloppy, she’s relaxed but really pleasing to listen to and she doesn’t make too much of a fuss, which makes her seem so regal. And in terms of her personality, she is kind, patient, open and caring towards her juniors.¹⁸³

Eka Suranti admires more than Nurhana’s voice, also praising her stage presence and her kindness towards others. Yet Nurhana’s voice is definitely central to Eka Suranti’s admiration. Listeners often praise the clarity of Nurhana’s voice and Nurhana attributes her sound in part to the influence of her mother. Her mother told her “Don’t go overboard with your *cengkok*! The important thing is clarity. *Gregel* needs to be clear. It can be felt.”¹⁸⁴

When Nurhana announced her divorce to Ki Joko Edan in 2013, it came as a surprise to those close to her. Kempling, a *campur sari* keyboardist who had worked closely with her, said that he was unaware that their marriage had problems and did not know that Nurhana had been seeking a divorce.¹⁸⁵ As of 2022 when we met, Nurhana did not have Facebook or Instagram, preferring to live a more private life. She said, “I don’t like my life being exposed to people.”¹⁸⁶ Since around the time of her divorce in 2013 and her marriage to businessman H. Haryanto in 2015, Nurhana largely stepped away from public performance. She has remained active in music,

¹⁸³ Eka Suranti, personal communication via Whatsapp, February 28th, 2024.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. [J. “*Ojo terlalu kakehan cengkok. Sing penting cetho. Gregel itu kudu cetho. Isa dirasakke.*”]

¹⁸⁵ Kempling, personal communication, November 11th, 2022.

¹⁸⁶ Nurhana Sri Wiryanti, personal communication, November 11th, 2022. [I. “*Saya gak suka hidup saya diexpos sama orang.*”]

however, and she and her husband host weekly *gamelan* rehearsals at their home in Kudus, Java. Through her relationship to social media and public performance, it is evident that she has navigated aging mostly by stepping away from the public eye.

Anik Sunyahni was born in Wonogiri, Java in 1976 and grew up in Sragen, Java in a family of artists.¹⁸⁷ Over time she became acquainted with many *dhalang* and she appeared frequently as a guest star in *wayang*.¹⁸⁸ In the mid 1990s, Sunyahni made successful recordings of *langgam Jawa* songs such as “*Ali-Ali*” (“Finger-Ring”) and “*Caping Gunung*” with Kusuma Records.¹⁸⁹ In the mid 1990s, Sunyahni had a contract with Indosiar, an Indonesian television network, which became her connection to a recording company called Dasa Records in Semarang, Java.¹⁹⁰ Sunyahni said she was invited to Dasa Records to collaborate on recordings with Manthous but was careful to point out, “Before I met Manthous I was already famous!”¹⁹¹ Sunyahni did not want her successful career to be attributed exclusively to her association with this artist. In fact, she said that Manthous’s career truly starting “booming” [*I. ngeboom*]¹⁹² only once he recorded with her.

Other *pesindhen* also admire Sunyahni’s voice, often citing her use of *cengkok* as a main feature. Putri Anjarsari writes that, “Ibu Sunyahni has coquettish *cengkok*. Her performance of *sindhenan* on *gendhing* “*Kutut Manggung*” was very popular at that time and was liked by many people because her *cengkok* was very distinctive.”¹⁹³ Unlike Nurhana, Sunyahni has remained active as a performer and even founded her own record label called Sunyah Records. She is very

¹⁸⁷ Anik Sunyahni, personal communication, July 5th, 2023.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. [I/J. *Sebelum ketemu Manthous saya udah kondhang dulu.*”]

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Putri Anjarsari, personal communication via Whatsapp, February 29th, 2024. [I/J. “*Ibu Sunyahni memiliki cengkok kemayu/centil, Gending kutut manggung yg nyinden beliau sangat populer waktu itu& disukai banyak orang karena cengkoknya sangat khas.*”]

confident about her voice and said, “Since I was small until now my voice, *alhamdulillah*,¹⁹⁴ hasn’t changed.”¹⁹⁵ Meanwhile, she is self-deprecating about her physical appearance: “Just being pretty is cheap. Sunyahni, ugly like this, [can make] ten thousand [*rupiah*]. Our conclusion tonight is that women don’t need to be pretty but must have expertise.”¹⁹⁶ Sunyahni believes that her success is built on her voice and her talent as opposed to her good looks and highlights the importance of skill.

I will now turn to focus on Nurhana and Sunyahni’s performances at Endahing Budaya Larasing Campursari. I examine both of these women in the same section because they are part of the same generation in terms of their age but also in terms of the peak of their careers in the mid-1990s to the early 2000s. The event opened with announcements from a pair of MCs and then Woro Mustiko, Endah Laras’s niece, performed the first song followed by an instrumental interlude led by Sangga Buana. Sunyahni and Nurhana’s first performance was of the *langgam Jawa* song “*Nyidam Sari*” and was in collaboration with Endah Laras. Sunyahni stepped out onto the stage first and began the *bawa* (described in more detail in Chapter 2). After a few phrases, she coyly invited Nurhana to the stage in Javanese saying, “Beautiful girl? Come closer, beautiful girl. Let’s switch! Tonight is a reunion, beautiful girl!”¹⁹⁷ Nurhana sang the next several phrases of the *bawa* and then Endah Laras sang several phrases. The three of them sang the end of the *bawa* together and then the orchestra began its musical accompaniment. While Endah Laras, Nurhana, and Sunyahni sang, their names were projected along with images and short video clips of them

¹⁹⁴ *Alhamdulillah* is a Muslim expression of gratitude.

¹⁹⁵ Anik Sunyahni, personal communication, July 5th, 2023. [I/A. “*Waktu kecil sampai sekarang suara saya alhamdulillah tidak berubah.*”]

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. [I. “*Hanya cantik saja itu murah. Kalau Sunyahni jelek kaya gini sepuluh juta. Kesimpulan kita pada malam ini wanita tidak harus cantik tapi punya keahlian.*”]

¹⁹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=br-QINRan3A> [J. *Wong ayu? Ini ngedhak, wong ayu. Gantian ya. Bengi iki reuni, wong ayu!*”]

when they were younger. The projection screen was far larger than the performers themselves, creating an effect where images from these performers' earlier careers loomed over their current stage presence.

Sunyahni and Nurhana presented very differently from each other in this performance. Sunyahni used open body language and opened her arms expressively while she sang. Nurhana, however, kept her arms relatively close to her sides and made smaller gestures than Sunyahni. Sunyahni chose to leave her hair exposed and wear *sanggul* while Nurhana wore *jilbab*, even though both of them cover their heads in observance of Islam in everyday life. This particular staged performance is in keeping with the way both of them have navigating aging in their careers: Sunyahni is continuing to display herself both through her movements and her uncovered hair while Nurhana prefers not to be "exposed to people," preferring a more subtle stage presence and wearing *jilbab*.

Nurhana's next performance was a solo rendition of "*Kusumaning Ati*" ("Flowering of the Heart") which is a *pop Jawa* song in a minor key. She maintained the typical delicate vibrato of her voice while adding a lamenting expression appropriate to the song. Nurhana's movements were gentle, she opened her hands as she sang and paced in a small area around the stage. Two dancers, male and female, performed a contemporary dance on the slightly lower stage in front of Nurhana.

Sunyahni's next performance was a duet with guest male singer, Kethis Pengging, for another *pop Jawa* song called "*Rondo Kempling*." The title of this song refers to a widow who looks like she is still a virgin or has never been married before. Sunyahni is known for her recording of "*Rondo Kempling*" with Manthous who is also the composer for this song. For her performance at Endahing Budaya Larasing Campursari, Sunyahni moved her hips and flirted with her male counterpart as they traded phrases of the song. She touched him on the shoulder and

teased with her eyes and her dance moves. Her voice was less controlled in this performance in comparison to “*Nyidam Sari*,” perhaps because she was moving more vigorously, but the coquettishness she is known for remained.

During Endahing Budaya Larasing Campursari, the artists participated in jokes about their changing bodies. After Sunyahni, Nurhana, and Endah Laras finished their rendition of “*Nyidam Sari*,” the three of them had an exchange about their weight. Endah Laras turned to Sunyahni and asked her, “How is it going?” and Sunyahni responded saying “It’s going with enormous people like this.”¹⁹⁸ Endah Laras laughed and Nurhana added, “Yeah and getting bigger!”¹⁹⁹ Then Endah offers a *pantun*, a kind of playful poetry, in a mix of Javanese, Indonesian and one English word as follows “Walking to the new market/ Don’t forget the shopping/ Don’t stare at a fat body/ The important thing is the way it moves.” [J/I/E “*Jalan jalan ke pasar baru/ Ojo lali blanjane/ Ojo nyawang bodi lemu/ sing penting bantingane.*”]

¹⁹⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=br-> [J. “*Kabaripun ‘dos pundi?’*”] [J. ““Dos kalih wong gedhi gedhi semene!””]

¹⁹⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=br-> [J. “*Ya tambah gedhi!*”]



Figure 25: From left, Nurhana, Endah Laras, and Sunyahni bantering on stage at Endahing Budaya Larasing Campursari. Photo by the author.

It is common for people in Central Java to comment directly if a person has gained or lost weight. Weight gain is perceived and responded to differently based on gender. When men in Central Java gain weight after getting married or becoming established in their career, it is often seen as a sign of success. When women in Central Java gain weight, people may respond with playful taunts but it is not seen as a sign of success in the same way as with men. An ideal body in Central Java is tight and firm [J. *singset*]. This resonates with what Susan Bordo describes as the American ideal since the 1980s: “a body that is absolutely tight, contained, ‘bolted down,’Area that are soft, loose, or “wiggly” are unacceptable” (2003, 190). Suzanne Brenner (1995) describes a contradiction in perceptions of controlling desire in Central Java. On the one hand, men are believed to have greater self-control than women (1995, 149). Brenner encountered a contrary

view, namely that “both men and women are subject to the sometimes overwhelming influence of their own desires, it is women, not men, who are believed to have more ability to control themselves” (Ibid). This also support Brenner’s argument that women are responsible for controlling the desires of both their husbands and their children. In this view, if a woman gains weight then she is not performing in her capacity for self-control and overcoming desire.

In this performance, these three women make light of their changing bodies with stage banter and playful rhyming poetry. The function of this element in their performance is twofold: (1) to anticipate comments from others regarding their weight and to intercept them and (2) to provide comic entertainment in the form of stage banter and playful rhyming poetry. Instead of ignoring or trying to downplay the size of their bodies, these women incorporate remarks on their bodies into their performance. In this scene, they are in control of their own representation and are agentive in wielding commentary on their bodies as a means of entertainment for the audience. Particularly for women who are socially positioned as “to be gazed at,” changes in weight can be challenging while maintaining a public persona. Instead, jokes about their bodies becomes material that they can use to their benefit on stage.

During the same event, videos of interviews with Nurhana and Sunyahni were projected on the screen. In one of these videos Nurhana said, first in Indonesian, “My advice to young people is not to abandon our identities as Eastern people, as people with Javanese culture” then switched to Javanese to say “Don’t abandon your Javanese-ness!”²⁰⁰ All of the songs performed that night were in Javanese language, many of them were *langgam Jawa* repertoire, every singer wore traditional *kebaya*, and stage banter was frequently in Javanese language as well. Nurhana began

²⁰⁰ [I. “*Saya berpesan anak anak muda jangan tinggalkan jati diri kita sebagai orang timur, orang yang berkebudayaan Jawa.*”] [J. “*Jawane ojo ditinggal.*”]

her appeal to preserve Eastern identity more broadly, something I rarely hear actually, and then switched to implore young people to preserve Javanese culture. Throughout the night, Nurhana modeled her own version of preserving Javanese culture through her staged presentation of *kebaya*, refined bodily comportment, *langgam Jawa* repertoire, and a vocal timbre influenced by years of experience in *gamelan* and *campur sari*.

In another video during the event, Sunyahni expressed her happiness in being able to join this event saying, “Right now I feel proud and happy as old as I am to still be used for an event as big as this!”²⁰¹ Although Sunyahni still regularly performs, the opportunities for her career are not as substantial in size as they were during her peak in the mid-1990s to early 2000s. Both women described this event as a “reunion” [I. *reuni*] and expressed gratitude with being able to gather with fellow *campur sari* performers from a bygone era. The projections of their younger selves behind them as they perform evokes nostalgia for the audience and the act of reuniting evokes nostalgia for the performers themselves.

²⁰¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=br-QINRan3A> [I. “*Saat ini saya merasa bangga bahagia setua ini saya masih digunakan untuk event yang sebesar ini.*”]



Figure 26: Sunyahi standing and performing in front of members of Sangga Buana. An image of Sunyahni when she was younger is projected behind her. Photo by the author.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter shows the way that three “queens” of *langgam Jawa* have navigated their aging voices and bodies in the context of staged performances and public personas. Waldjinh’s career spanned the transition of *langgam Jawa* from a genre to a repertoire. Waldjinh’s played an active role in this transition, supported by her fame and the fact that younger singers admire her

career and her way of being. Waldjinhah's use of *kain* and *kebaya* in staged performances, the coquettish quality of her voice, and her refined stage presence were a part of *langgam Jawa* as a genre, and she continued to employ all of these aspects in her staged performances of *langgam Jawa* repertoire in both *kroncong* and *campur sari* settings in the 1990s and 2000s. Sunyahni and Nurhana's careers began in the 1990s with *campur sari*, when *langgam Jawa* began to be regarded as a repertoire, and their performances played a role in shaping the identity of *campur sari* as a genre. As Sunyahni said, she was already famous before she met Manthous, already playing an active role in forming the identity of *campur sari* as a genre that drew on *langgam Jawa* repertoire. Sunyahni's staged persona is bold and flirtatious and her dance movements are highly dynamic while Nurhana's staged persona is more refined and still. Their staged performances play a role in setting a range of anticipated and accepted ways of being in *campur sari*.

I posit that nostalgia plays a role in both their continued opportunities to perform and the way that they are presented in these performances. In both the Solo Keroncong Festival and *Kick Andy*, Waldjinhah performed "Walang Kekek" because it is the song that many Javanese listeners associate with her career. She has performed and recorded hundreds of other songs even within the past two decades, but nostalgic listeners still want to hear her 1968 song. In terms of the way that these women are presented, during Endahing Budaya Larasing Campursari, each of the lead singers performed with projections of their younger selves behind them. The live performances of Nurhana, Endah Laras, and Sunyahni were haunted by their younger selves even though, particularly in the case of Endah Laras and Sunyahni, they have both continued performing and recording beyond the *campursari* era of the 1990s.

During their early careers, Waldjinhah, Nurhana, and Sunyahni were all known for their physical attractiveness. Nurhana and Sunyahni were both always known for their vocal talent and

that continues to support their popularity and opportunities to perform as they age. Wadjinah has also long been known for her vocal talent yet her current status is distinct from Nurhana and Sunyahni's. As they have aged, all three of them have been able to negotiate audience expectations in part by leaning on the association of *langgam Jawa* with nostalgia. Particularly for Wadjinah, this nostalgia has made it possible for her to take on a role as a "living legend." Her status as a cultural icon is in part because of her advanced age and also due to her being an early performer in *langgam Jawa*. Although attitudes towards aging in Indonesia are changing, Wadjinah still commands respect from listeners and fellow musicians.

6.0 CONCLUSION

On October 29th, 2022, I went to a screening of producer Fanny Chotimah's documentary *Riwayatmu Kini* at Rumah Banjarsari in Surakarta. This documentary was both a retrospective and a commentary on the current state of *kroncong* in Surakarta. *Riwayatmu Kini* featured interviews with several important figures in the *kroncong* community in Surakarta including Agung Riyadi, bandleader for a comedy *kroncong* group called Orkes Plasu Minimal.²⁰² In describing some early developments in *langgam Jawa kroncong*, he cited Endarto as the creator of the current tuning system and playing style for the *cak*, a story I had also heard from Waldjinhah among others.²⁰³ Endarto played with Orkes Keroncong Bintang Surakarta (Surakarta Star Kroncong Group) which frequently accompanied Waldjinhah both in Java and in tours abroad. Endarto is featured on the cover of *Entit*, released by Lokananta in 1971 shown in Figure X. In addition to crediting him as the mind behind the current tuning system for *cak*, Agung Riyadi cited Endarto as the innovator of the currently more typical flourished *cuk* style. Instead of simply playing chords in an interlocking pattern with the *cak*, many *cuk* players in Surakarta play an embellished single line that outlines notes in the chord. This story struck me because it links an important, lasting musical innovation to an individual, challenging the idea of a gradual, collective creation of *langgam Jawa* that Adji Muska outlined in Chapter 2. Further, this story suggests two conflicting ways that genre might be formed. In Adji Muska's story, the musical elements for *langgam Jawa* played by early

²⁰² Orkes Plasu Minimal is a play on the word for false [I. *palsu*] or not original or true [I. *asli*]. This is a word play [I. *plesetan*] of *kroncong asli* and the full name of the group is referring to the fact that they play *kroncong* but are not a full *kroncong* group and do not play traditional repertoire.

²⁰³ Waldjinhah, personal communication, May 4th, 2018. See also McGraw 2022 and *Ensiklopedia Keroncong* 2023.

campur sari groups at RRI Semarang would have been formed collectively. In Agung Riyadi's story, musical elements for *langgam Jawa* as played by *kroncong* ensembles were heavily influenced by an individual, namely Endarto.

I posit that the emergence of *langgam Jawa* resulted from a combination of both collective creation and also specific and traceable contributions from individuals. It is well-known that Andjar Any was an early and prolific composer of *langgam Jawa* repertoire. However, his popularity followed a gap in commercial recording in Indonesia first between 1942-1945 during Japanese occupation and then between 1945-1949 during the Indonesian Revolution (see Yampolsky 2013). Therefore any precursors to Andjar Any's contributions would have gone undocumented. Further, even during eras wherein commercial recordings were being made, only a select few performers were being recorded. Although we can attribute specific and important playing techniques to contributors like Endarto, he is not single-handedly responsible for the entire texture of the repertoire. At present, the maintenance and development of *langgam Jawa* is steered in part by the performers in this dissertation: by the members of Sangga Buana featured in Chapter 3, by the multi-genre singers featured in Chapter 4, and by the aging queens of this repertoire in Chapter 5.

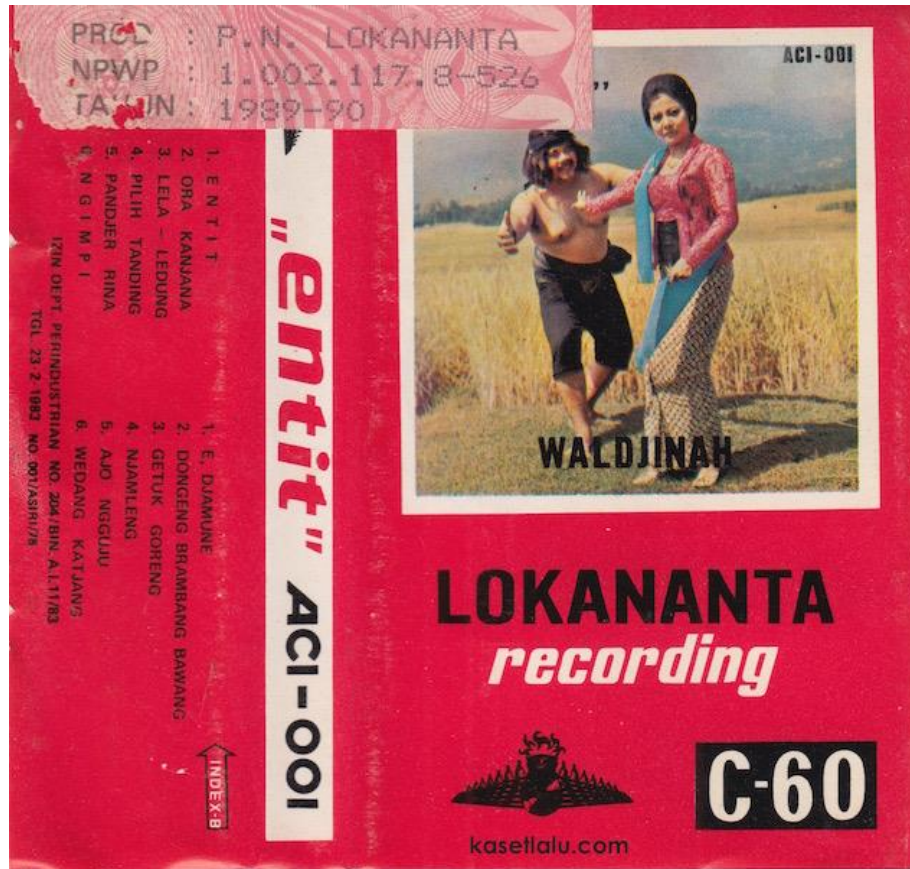


Figure 27: The cover of Waldjinh’s album *Entit*, recorded by Lokananta in 1971. Waldjinh is pictured in kebaya warding off the advances of a shirtless man, Endarto, in a field.

Langgam Jawa problematizes the boundaries of song form as evidenced in Chapter 2; musicians use the term to describe 32-bar song forms, but they may also describe a musical texture that uses approximations of *pelog* or *slendro* tuning systems as *langgam Jawa*. “*Angka Loro*,” or originally “*Ela Elo*,” meets certain expectations of *langgam Jawa* as a style regarding the use of Javanese language and an equal-tempered approximation of the *pelog* tuning system. However, “*Angka Loro*” and “*Ela Elo*” do not use the 32-bar AA’BA’ song form. Yanti Mboel described “*Ela Elo*” as a “special *langgam Jawa*” song [I. *langgam Jawa istimewa*], referring to the fact the

it uniquely defied the typical 32-bar song form.²⁰⁴ Arum Dyah Hapsari agreed saying, “It’s a special *langgam jawa*. Because only half of the form is *langgam* [Jawa] and the other half is *dangdut Jawa*.”²⁰⁵ Other musicians have told me that “*Walang Kekek*” is another special *langgam Jawa* [I. *langgam Jawa istimewa*]. “*Walang Kekek*” does not switch musical genres halfway through the form like “*Ela Elo*,” however it does not follow the AA’BA’ song structure. *Langgam Jawa* frequently defies its own boundaries.

Langgam Jawa was once considered to be a genre (Yampolsky 1987, Mrázek 2005) although my interlocuters now consider it to be a repertoire. *Langgam Jawa* challenges the boundaries of genre because the same songs are often repurposed in distinct yet overlapping genre cultures. As an example, in Chapter 1 “*Caping Gunung*” was presented in a *campur sari* arrangement in a wedding as a way to frame bawdy, slapstick entertainment, departing far from the *kroncong* context for which this song was originally written. Repertoire and genre are fluid categories. Repertoires constitute genres as music as genres constitute repertoires, and people are at the center of these negotiations. The way that a single song like “*Caping Gunung*” transforms across genres shows the way that genre is constantly becoming but never entirely arrives.

Even within the broader category of *langgam Jawa* repertoire, the terrain is unstable and irregular. In October 2022 I filmed Orkes Kroncong Cahaya Irama playing a *langgam Jawa* song called “*Lali Janjine*” (“(He) Forgot (His) Promise”) with their permission. When I uploaded the video I asked in the Whatsapp group chat how I should label it. Should it be “*langgam Jawa kroncong*” since they are performing the song with *kroncong* instruments? They answered that it

²⁰⁴ Yanti Mboel, personal communication, June 25th, 2023.

²⁰⁵ Arum Dyah Hapsari, personal communication via Whatsapp, January 8th, 2024. [I. *Langgam Jawa istimewa Mbak. Karena bentuk langgam cuma setengah pola, setengahnya lagi dangdut jawa.*]

should be labelled “*langgam Jawa*” because the song was originally written for a *campur sari* ensemble. The fact that it has crossed genres, from *campur sari* to this performance with *kroncong* instruments, meant that no label was needed for the genre at all. The musicians did not ask me to label the video “*langgam Jawa campur sari*.” Instead, this song became part of the broader repertoire of *langgam Jawa*.

As I have shown in previous chapters, distinctions among performances of *langgam Jawa* across genre are deeply tied to vocal timbre. Women are key figures, or “Queens” (Chapter 5), in these performances of timbre (Chapter 4). Women were featured prominently in the early decades of *langgam Jawa* and continue to be, in part because of the influence of nostalgia. Listeners remember singers like Waldjinah, Sunyahni, and Nurhana from the peak of their careers and continue to support their live performances. There is a body of songs like “*Caping Gunung*” and “*Yen Ing Tawang*” that musicians and listeners continue to play and request. The traditions of this repertoire, such as song choice and the prominence of women as singers, continue to be maintained during staged performances and in informal rehearsals.

Although *langgam Jawa* is associated with nostalgia, this does not preclude the potential for development. This repertoire is not as thriving and active as it was during the peak of *langgam Jawa kroncong* in the 1970s or the peak of *langgam Jawa* as played by *campur sari* ensembles in the late 1990s and early 2000s. At the same time, I do not believe that *langgam Jawa* is under great threat and I am not aiming to “salvage” this music. *Langgam Jawa* repertoire has already demonstrated a durability as it has been repurposed among the genres of *kroncong*, *gamelan*, and *campur sari*. Musicians continue to use the basic 32-bar song form, or even the style and musical textures of *langgam Jawa*, to compose new songs. Further, new elements are added with old

elements such as the use of an orchestra with a full *campur sari* ensemble at Endahing Budaya Larasing Campursari, another form of the “semantic snowballing” that Turino describes.

The genres themselves are also durable and flexible. Musicians continue to adapt *campur sari*, for instance, to the needs of the context and situation. Nurhana comments, “That’s what’s special about *campur sari*. So, *campur sari* can now adapt to situations and conditions. For example, it can accompany pop songs. It can accompany *dangdut* songs. It can accompany *karawitan* songs. It can even accompany the bride and groom ah... if there’s a traditional ceremony such as the meeting of the parents or the meeting of the bride and groom.”²⁰⁶ Nurhana outlines the way that a *campur sari* ensemble can play almost any kind of repertoire and accompany a range of special events. This flexibility has made *campur sari* a popular choice for traditional events, although within the past 10-15 years many families have started to choose smaller ensembles because of cost issues. A single keyboardist who plays melodies and beats while singing known as *orgen tunggal* is the most cost effective option for a special event. Despite the flexibility of *campur sari* ensembles, this typically 25-person ensemble is hard-pressed to compete with the price of a single musician.

Each of the chapters in this dissertation shows the interplay of women as singers and genre with *langgam Jawa*. Waldjinh frequently performed during Golkar’s campaign rallies. On this album which featured three genres, *gamelan*, *kroncong*, and *campur sari*, Waldjinh lent her coquettish vocals to song lyrics that extolled the virtues of the Golkar party. Waldjinh was not the only singer to appear on albums promoting Golkar during the New Order, but on this album

²⁰⁶ Nurhana, personal communication, November 11th, 2022. [I/J. “Itu peristimewaan campursari jadi campursari sekarang itu bisa menyesuaikan dengan situasi dan kondisi. Misalnya campursari itu bisa mengiringi lagu lagu pop. Bisa mengiringi lagu lagu dangdut. bisa mengiringi karawitan. Bahkan bisa mengiringi waktu pengantin ah ada upacara adat misalnya temu, panggih, waktu ditemokke mantene.”]

her voice in front and center in an aim to appeal to the *rakyat* of Central Java. The other appealing aspect of this song, what makes it a special *langgam Jawa* piece [I. *langgam Jawa istimewa*], is the transition from a stratified *gamelan* texture to a *dangdut* rhythm halfway through the song. This example shows the malleability of the *langgam Jawa* song form, demonstrating that what constitutes a repertoire is not static or fixed.

Langgam Jawa is formed by the performances of women as singers. Waldjinhah frequently performed during Golkar's campaign rallies. On this album which featured three genres, *gamelan*, *kroncong*, and *campur sari*, Waldjinhah lent her coquettish vocals to song lyrics that extolled the virtues of the Golkar party. Waldjinhah was not the only singer to appear on albums promoting Golkar during the New Order, but on this album her voice in front and center in an aim to appeal to the *rakyat* of Central Java. The other appealing aspect of this song, what makes it a special *langgam Jawa* piece [I. *langgam Jawa istimewa*], is the transition from a stratified *gamelan* texture to a *dangdut* rhythm with diatonic harmonic accompaniment halfway through the song. This example shows the malleability of the *langgam Jawa* song form, demonstrating that what constitutes a repertoire is not static or fixed.

Pesindhen performing with *campur sari* groups in Central Java often perform *langgam Jawa*. However, these women also sing *dangdut*, pop songs, and perform classic *sindhenan* throughout events, taking on roles as both *pesindhen* and *penyanyi*, crossing genres throughout the event. The *pesindhen* may also dance at certain points during the event as part of the entertainment. Even while the *pesindhen* perform a pop song with *campur sari* accompaniment, their clothing, dance movements, and stage banter in Javanese signals the genre culture of *campur sari*.

Many of the performers that I have described are able to switch vocal timbres among genres in *langgam Jawa*. The distinctions that these vocalists make is part of what maintains the genre

identity of the music being performed. Chapter 4 focuses on the way that women singers in Central Java switch timbres among genres in *langgam Jawa*. I focused mainly on the differentiation between the vocal timbres associated with *campur sari* and with *kroncong*. The distinct vocal timbres that these women produce are part of what makes *langgam Jawa* a repertoire and not a genre. Although vocal timbre varies from person to person, each genre has a range of vocal timbres that listeners associate with its given genre culture. The performances of singers of *langgam Jawa* are part of what build the distinct genre cultures of *kroncong*, *campur sari*, and *gamelan*. The range of associated vocal timbres is too wide to be contained in a single genre. Instead, *langgam Jawa* is a repertoire that can be transferred across genres and shaped within each respective genre culture.

More research could investigate performances of *langgam Jawa* in other genres such as *dangdut*. In the Introduction, I mentioned that *dangdut* musicians occasionally perform *langgam Jawa*. For example, Milady Record Official posted a video on Youtube in 2019 *dangdut* singer Nella Kharisma singing “*Blitar*,” a *langgam Jawa* song which is named after a city in East Java, which had 5.9 million views as of 2024.²⁰⁷ “*Blitar*” was written by Andjar Any in an approximation of *slendro* tuning for *kroncong* instruments and is about Indonesia’s struggle for independence. Another example is Yeni Inka’s performance of “*Lali Janjine*,” written by S. Harsono, with OM Adella. This video was posted in 2021 by Henny Adella as has over 31 million views as of 2024. This song is better known as a *campur sari* piece that uses the *pelog* tuning system. Interestingly, both performances use harmonic approximations of *slendro* and *pelog* tuning systems; the musicians choose functional chords for their renditions of the piece. I have also seen this technique, applying functional harmony to *langgam Jawa* songs, done by performers in other genres. One

²⁰⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_OS9Im_E2QM.

example is Youtuber Siho Live Acoustic, a musician from Yogyakarta with over 612,000 subscribers as of 2024. Siho sings *langgam Jawa* songs while he picks chords on the acoustic guitar and always dresses in *blangkon* and *klambi lurik*.²⁰⁸ Further research might examine how musicians make decisions while harmonizing songs that otherwise use *pelog* or *slendro* tuning systems.

In the Introduction, I mentioned that *kroncong* groups will sometimes borrow melodic riffs from *campur sari* in their renditions of *langgam Jawa* repertoire. Further research would provide musical analysis of such borrowings, comparing the way that these musical elements are performed between the two genres. This analysis would offer further evidence regarding the exchange among genres. As an example, the song “*Caping Gunung*” was originally written for *kroncong* ensembles. When played by *campur sari* ensembles, however, certain melodic riffs are added for increased energy. During my research between 2022-2023, I often heard *kroncong* groups borrow these melodic riffs, demonstrating an exchange of influences among genres wherein the same repertoire is played.

In this dissertation, I did not offer a comprehensive history of *langgam Jawa* as it is performed in *kroncong*, *campur sari*, and *gamelan*. Instead, I provided close examinations of four specific analytical slices through these social worlds. I attribute the durability of *langgam Jawa*, the fact that many of these songs have been in continuous performance for at least 70 years, to three factors: (1) the ingenuity of performers in reforming and repurposing this song form in different social contexts and (2) the evocative power of nostalgia of *langgam Jawa* for Javanese listeners, whether a nostalgia for earlier years in the listener’s own life or an idyllic past that urban

²⁰⁸ *Klambi lurik* is a traditional Javanese top with a striped pattern that is worn by both men and women.

listeners never experienced directly (3) the transition of *langgam Jawa* from a genre in the context of *kroncong* to a repertoire that is played in the contexts of *kroncong*, *gamelan*, and *campur sari*.

As I mentioned in the Introduction, *langgam Jawa* was already considered to be a repertoire within the context of *gamelan* when Ki Nartosabdho began composing pieces for *gamelan* ensembles in the 1960s. Campursari RRI Semarang was playing these *langgam Jawa* pieces in the 1960s, also regarding them as a repertoire as the songs were being repurposed for a new genre. In the same era, *langgam Jawa* as played by *kroncong* ensembles was regarded by musicians and the prominent recording company Lokananta as a genre. This shifted in the 1990s when popular *campur sari* groups began playing *langgam Jawa*. These groups were able to play songs like “*Yen Ing Tawang*” and “*Caping Gunung*” that had been composed for *kroncong* ensembles as well as songs like “*Ojo Lamis*” and “*Kelinci Ucul*,” both of which were originally composed by Ki Nartosabdho for *gamelan* contexts. For instance, in a wedding on January 7th, 2023 in Tawangmangu, an area outside of Surakarta, Sangga Buana played “*Ojo Lamis*” during the *sungkeman* wherein the bride and the groom pay respects to their parents as well as “*Yen Ing Tawang*” later in the wedding. In the context of what my interlocuters call “*campur sari populer*,” older *langgam Jawa* pieces from *kroncong* and *gamelan* were and continue to be repurposed and meanwhile new *langgam Jawa* pieces have and continue to be written for the genre of *campur sari*. The circulation of older *langgam Jawa* pieces in new contexts is part of what has made these songs so durable.

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Glossary

Alhamdulillah. A: A Muslim expression of gratitude.

alus. J: Smooth or refined in manner of behavior, dress, or bodily comportment.

asas keluarga. I: A New Order principle wherein society was likened to a harmonious family.

batik. I: A technique of wax-resistant dyeing to create a pattern on an entire piece of cloth. This technique originated in Java and is popular throughout Indonesia.

bawa. J: An unaccompanied vocal opening which typically uses a kind of metered poetry called *macapat*. It can be used to open long, classical gamelan pieces or to open *langgam Jawa* songs.

blangkon. J: A type of headgear made of batik fabric and worn by men in Java.

campur sari. J/I: A musical genre that originated in Central Java and combines elements from *kroncong* and Javanese *gamelan*. *Campur sari* ensembles can and often do use all of the instruments involved in *kroncong* and *gamelan* ensembles. *Campur sari* ensembles now feature a keyboard and many include a drum set which is typically electronic. In lieu of or sometimes in addition to an acoustic guitar and upright bass, some *campur sari* ensembles use an electric guitar and electric bass.

cak. J: A stringed instrument which is commonly found in *kroncong* ensembles. The *cak* has four metal strings, two of which are in a course like on a mandolin, and usually plays on the weak beats in an interlocking pattern with the *cuk*.

cengkok. J: Melodic embellishments or melismas that are specific to musical genres or styles of singing.

cekak. J: Meaning short or brief, this term can refer to breathing in singing to indicate that the phrases are short.

cuk. J: A stringed instrument which is commonly found in *kroncong* ensembles. The *cuk* has three nylon strings and usually plays on the strong beats in an interlocking pattern with the *cak*.

dangdut. I: A popular genre influenced heavily by Indian film music and *orkes Melayu*, that emerged in the 1970s. Typically instrumentation includes a flute known as *suling*, a percussion instrument known as *gendang*, electric guitar, electric bass, a drum kit, and a singer

dawet. J: A dessert that contains droplets of green, pandan-flavored rice flour jelly, coconut milk and syrup from palm sugar.

dhingklik. J: A small stool used by *pesindhen* to ease the intensity of the kneeling position that they often hold for hours as they perform.

dhalang. J: A narrator and puppeteer of *wayang*.

gamelan. J/I: A multi-timbral melodic percussion ensemble, originating in the Indonesian islands of Java and Bali. Although *gamelan* began as a royal court orchestra, it can now be heard in classical, contemporary, and university contexts internationally. *Gamelan* often features one or several vocalists known as *pesindhen*. Mid-range melodies are played on pitched percussion instruments known as *saron* (relatively smaller) and *demung* (relatively larger). Melodies are played by a spike fiddle [J. *rebab*] and an end-blown, bamboo flute [I/J. *suling*]. The *siter*, a type of plucked zither, is used to play high figurations. The *gambang* is a wooden, xylophone-like instrument that plays cascading figurations. *Bonang* refers to a set of small bossed gongs that rest horizontally over a low frame. Larger bossed gongs known as *kenong* are used to play slower, punctuating figurations. The gong is the largest metallophone in the ensemble and plays the most infrequently. Each gong has a raised boss, is hung vertically, and there are generally several gong in a full *gamelan* ensemble. *Gamelan* ensembles can range from around 15-25 instrumentalists but sometimes musicians play in smaller formations also known as *gadhon* which may include some variation of *rebab*, *gender*, *gambang*, *kendhang*, and a *pesindhen*. A vocalist may or may not be featured in full *gamelan* ensembles, but it almost always featured in *gadhon* ensembles.

gelungan. I: A traditional ladies' hair arrangement in Java, consisting of a smooth bun at the back. See *sanggul*.

gender. J: A type of metallophone used in Javanese *gamelan* music and played with two padded mallets.

jatihlan. J: Alternatively known as *kuda lumping* or *jaran kepeng*, *jatihlan* a traditional dance wherein the performer "rides" a flat, woven bamboo horse prop.

jilbab. I: A headscarf worn by Muslim women in Indonesia.

kain. I: Refers to a fabric, usually with a batik pattern, that is wrapped around the legs and worn by people of any gender as part of traditional dress in Java and other parts of Indonesia. See *sarong*.

kebaya. I: An upper garment traditionally worn by women in Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia.

kejawen. J: A Javanese spiritual tradition consisting of a syncretic amalgam of animistic, Buddhist, and Hindu aspects

kendhang. J: A drum featured in *gamelan* ensembles which is covered with leather at each end and beaten with the palms of the hands and fingers.

klambi lurik. J: A traditional Javanese top with a striped pattern, worn by people of all genders.

klenengan. J: Social events featuring *gamelan*.

keris. J: Alternatively spelled *kris*, a *keris* is a dagger that is most commonly used as a spiritual object but can also be a weapon.

kroncong. I: Initially a folk music which can be traced back to 16th century Portuguese influence to the archipelago now known as Indonesia, *kroncong* became a popular music in the early 1900s. *Kroncong* features a vocalist and is played mostly with stringed instruments including a pair of ukulele-like instruments called the *cuk* and the *cak* which play in an interlocking pattern. The *cuk* and *cak* share an instrumental ancestor with the ukulele: the Portuguese *cavaquinho*. (Yampolsky 2010, 8). A *selo*, similar to a cello but with three strings and played in a pizzicato style, provides a pitched rhythmic accompaniment in *kroncong* music. A transverse flute [I. *flute*] and violin [I. *viol*] play flowing melodies and play in a call-and-response with the vocalist. *Kroncong* ensembles typically involve seven instrumentalists and at least one vocalist. Sometimes *kroncong* groups, particularly street musicians, play in a smaller formation called *gadhon* which usually involves *cuk*, *cak*, and *selo*; one of the instrumentalists will usually sing while playing. (See Nuswantoro 2013).

kroncong asli. I: A song form consisting of a 28 bar chord sequence, embellished with additional preludes and interludes, that dates back to the early 20th century. Uses functional tonic-dominant harmony.

lakon. J: A plot or scenario of a *wayang* performances.

landhung. J: Meaning protracted or drawn-out, this term can refer to breathing in singing to indicate that the phrases are long.

langgam Jawa. I/J: A 32-bar form using A-A'-B-A' with each section consisting of eight bars. Instead of using a system of functional tonic-dominant harmony, the music in *langgam Jawa* is arranged modally as approximations of the *gamelan slendro* and *pelog* pentatonic scales

langgam Jawa kroncong. I/J: *Langgam Jawa* songs as played by *kroncong* ensembles.

langgam kroncong. I: A song form consisting of a 32 bar chord sequence, embellished with additional preludes and interludes, that dates back to the early 20th century. Uses functional tonic-dominant harmony.

macapat. J: A type of classical poetry of various forms based on syllable-count and the final vowel in each phrase.

merantau. M: A verb that refers to the tendency of Minangkabau people to travel and wander.

orgen tunggal. I: *Orgen tunggal* refers to a single keyboard player who might also sing, using programmed rhythms while also playing chords and melody. In the past twenty years, *orgen tunggal* has become a popular and relatively inexpensive option for events such as weddings.

penyanyi. I: Refers to a singer, potentially from a range of genres, including but not limited to *kroncong*, *dangdut*, rock, and pop.

pesindhen. J: A female vocalist in Central Javanese *gamelan*. Alternatively *pasinden* in West Java.

pranoto adicara. J: A type of MC who specializes in ceremonies in Central Java and uses high Javanese to narrate the event to guests.

organ tunggal. I: Refers to a single keyboard player who might also sing, using programmed rhythms while also playing chords and melody. In the past twenty years, *organ tunggal* has become a popular and relatively inexpensive option for events such as weddings.

rakyat. I: Popularly defined as everyday people in Indonesia, the *rakyat* are framed differently depending on the context. Andrew Weintraub (2010, 82) traces the way that the *rakyat* are alternately disparaged by magazine and newspaper articles as idle and ignorant and held up as “innocent, morally superior, economically unprivileged but politically sovereign figures who often suffer from injustice inflicted by the rich and powerful” (Heryanto 1999,163).

reog. J: A traditional dance featuring wherein the performer wears a lion headdress with a peacock feather decoration.

risoles. I: Savory pastries, usually with a meat filling, found throughout Indonesia.

rupiah. I: Indonesia’s currency.

Sangga Buana. J: A *campur sari* group that formed in 1995 in Karanganyar, Java and continues to be active as of 2024.

sanggul. J: A traditional ladies’ hair arrangement in Java, consisting of a smooth bun at the back. See *gelungan*.

sarong. I: Refers to a fabric, usually with a batik pattern, that is wrapped around the legs and worn by people of any gender as part of traditional dress in Java and other parts of Indonesia. See *kain*.

selo. I: An instrument similar in appearance to a cello but with only three strings that are played in a pizzicato style. The *selo* is a common instrument in *kroncong* ensembles.

senggakan. I: Sounds resembling the *kendhang*, usually done by human vocalization, that add to the overall energy of the piece.

seriosa. I: Art songs sung in the Malay and Indonesian language which gained prominence in Indonesia starting in the early 1950s

sindhenan. J: Vocalization performed by *pesindhen* which typically draws from *wangsalan* and *macapat* as a featured solo. Can also refer to mixed-gender choral song for court dances.

Sragenan. I: A musical treatment that comes from the city of Sragen in Central Java and features driving, danceable rhythms.

waas. S: A feeling of nostalgia, wistfulness and longing evoked by many songs in the chamber music genre *tembang Sunda*.

wangsalan. J: A type of text that is used during *sindhenan*, often using deeply complex poetry and sometimes conveying advice that is believed to reflect Javanese values.

wayang kulit. J: Shadow puppet theater typical but not exclusive to Central Java. Uses flat puppets cut from water-buffalo hide.

wayang golek. S: Rod puppet theater typical but not exclusive to West Java.

A Note About Translation and Spelling

All of the translations in this work are my own unless otherwise noted. In translations, I aim to convey what I perceive to be the intention of the speaker. As such, when I translate quotations from speakers I often include pauses and hesitations to more closely align with not just *what* they said but also the *way* they said it. In general, I aim to most accurately deliver the intended meaning of the speaker rather than a literal translation which can sound clunky or stiff. Except in direct quotes, all names of places and historical figures follow the current Indonesian system of spelling (e.g. Suharto and Surabaya as opposed to Soeharto and Soerabaja). I follow Philip Yampolsky in my spelling of *kroncong* (as opposed to *keroncong* or *krontjong*) and I follow Supanggah in my spelling of *campur sari* (as opposed to *campursari*). I avoid diacritics unless they are consistently used for someone's name. Throughout this dissertation I refer to text translated from various languages. I use the following abbreviations:

J: Javanese

I: Indonesian

S: Sundanese

A: Arabic

M: Minangkabau

A Note About Honorifics, Names, and Terms

Many Indonesians use a single name in their everyday life. In general, I follow this practice and refer to them by that name as opposed to their last name. It is also very common in Central Java to use honorifics such as Mas (roughly translates to Brother), Mbak (roughly translates to Sister), Ibu (roughly translates to Mother), Pak (roughly translates to Father), Om (roughly translates to Uncle), or Eyang (roughly translates to Grandparent) when referring to or addressing a person. Although it would be unheard of in Central Java to address a senior musician without the honorific Pak as a sign of respect, I have decided to omit these honorifics. This is in part because honorifics are relational; whether I choose to address someone as Ibu and Mbak has to do with a delicate nexus of my relationship with them, our relative ages, and our relative social statuses. These relationships can change over time and may be interruptive to a reader who does not have the same relationship with my interlocuter.

The word *pesindhen* can be singular or plural. In this dissertation, when I use the word “they” following the term *pesindhen*, I am referring to more than one person as opposed to a singular person of an unknown or nonbinary gender. At the time of my dissertation research, there are *pesindhen* such as Mimin or Apri who were assigned male at birth and perform as female *pesindhen* in *wayang*. This is an important topic that demands further research.

Appendix: "Angka Loro"

Angka Loro

Music by Ted Sutedjo
Lyrics by W.S. Nardi
(1997)

$\text{♩} = 96$
Inst:

6 3 2 2

5 3 1 5 5 6 6 Vox:

Ang-ka lo -

A 6 6 2 2

ro Sli-ra-mu ngen - di - ka sa - wi - se mer-di - ka Se-tya tu-hu ma-rang Pan-ca -

15 1 1 5 5

si - la Ma-lah njur pra-set - ya Ngu-ri - u - ri tut wu - ri Go-long-an kar -

19 6 2 6 Inst: 6 Vox:

ya Ang - ka lo -

Ch:

Ang - ka lo - ro ang - ka ang - ka lo - ro

B 6 6 2 2

ro Yen wis ndu-we ja - go Ra sah men-ga - men - go Ya wis te-tep te-tep te-tep ku -

27 1 1 5 5

wi Di - be - lani, ngan - ti ma - ti, no - mer lo - ro a - ja la -

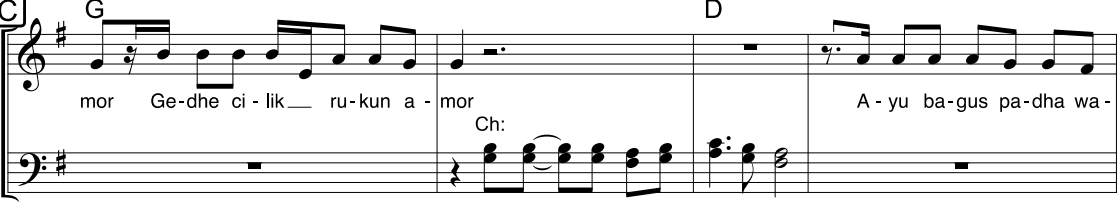
31 6 Inst: 2 2 1


li


Angka Loro - Piano - pg. 2


35 1 5 5 6 6 Vox:

 Mon-tor a - pik ja - re Ti -

C G D

 mor Ge-dhe ci - lik ru-kun a - mor A - yu ba-gus pa-dha wa -
 Ch:
 Gol-kar - ku pe-lo - por

44 G

 e Yen wus cu - kup usi - an - e Bu - ruh ku - li swa-sta ja -
 8
 Mi - lih Gol-kar wa - e

48 G D

 re Tu-kang mba - tik pa-dha wa - e Tu-kang pi-jet a-dol da -
 Nyo-blos Gol-kar sa - e

52 G Inst: Vox:

 wet So - pir be - cak so - pir ta - xi Ang - ka lo -
 8
 Gol-kar ja - ya pa - sti

D 6 6 2 2

 ro Ge-la-ring san - ya - ta Ka-beh kang su-tres - na Me-sem - me-sem tan-da tan-da le -

60 1 1 5 5

 ga Tan - pa sa - mu - da - na sing di - co - blos, tahu li - ya Go-long - an Kar -

Angka Loro - Piano - pg. 3

64 6 Inst: 2 2 1



ya

68 1 5 5 6 6 Vox:



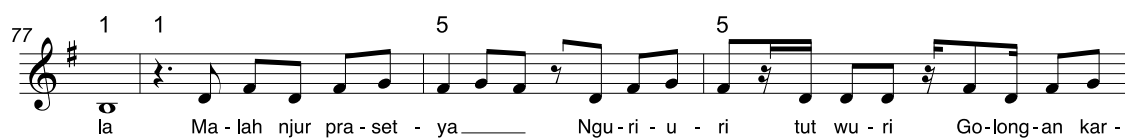
Ang-ka lo -

E 6 6 2 2




ro Sli-ra-mu ngen-di - ka sa - wi - se mer - di - ka Se-tya tu-hu ma-rang Pan-ca-si -

77 1 1 5 5



la Ma-lah njur pra-set - ya Ngu-ri - u - ri tut wu - ri Go-long-an kar -

81 6 Inst: 2 6 6 Vox:



ya Ang - ka lo -

Ang - ka lo - ro ang - ka ang - ka lo - ro

F 6 6 2 2



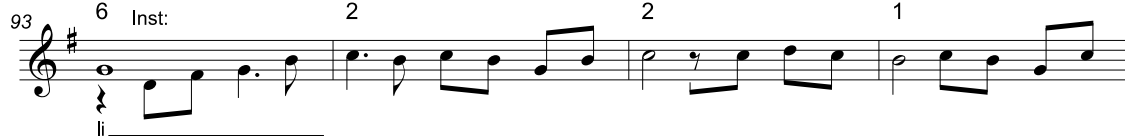
ro Yen wis ndu-we ja - go Ra sah men-ga - men - go Ya wis te-tep te-tep te-tep ku -

89 1 1 5 5



wi Di - be - lani, ngan - ti ma - ti, no - mer lo - ro a - ja la -

93 6 Inst: 2 2 1



li

97 1 5 5 6 6 Vox:



Mon-tor a-pik ja-re Ti -

Angka Loro - Piano - pg. 4

G **G** **D**

mor Ge-dhe ci - lik__ ru-kun a - mor

Ch:

A - yu ba-gus pa-dha wa -

Gol-kar - ku pe-lo - por__

106 **G**

e Yen wus cu - kup usi - an - e

Bu - ruh ku - li swa-sta ja -

Mi - lih__ Gol-kar wa - e

110 **G** **D**

re Tu - kang mba-tik__ pa-dha wa - e

Tu - kang pi-jet a-dol da -

Nyo-blos Gol-kar sa - e__

114 **G** Inst:

wet So - pir__ be - cak__ so - pir ta - xi

Gol - kar__ ja - ya pa - sti